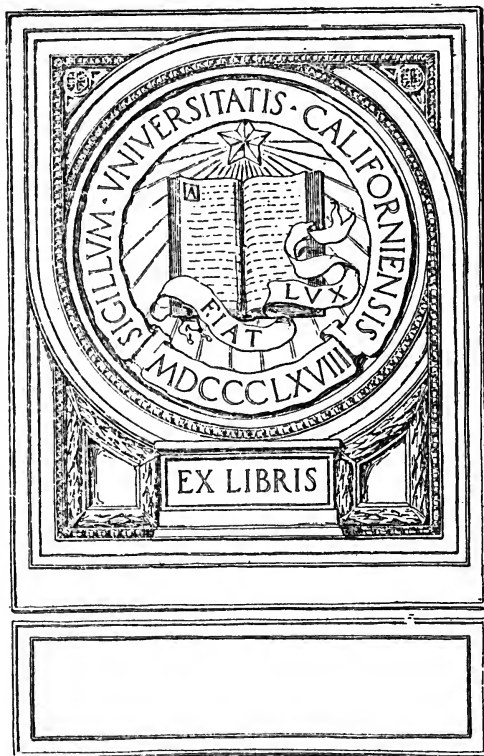




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# THE HARVEST OF JAPAN



# THE HARVEST OF JAPAN

*A Book of Travel with some Account of the  
Trees, Gardens, Agriculture, Peasantry, and  
Rural Requirements of Japan*

BY

C. BOGUE LUFFMANN

*Author of "A Vagabond in Spain"  
"Quiet Days in Spain," etc.*

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TO THE  
MEMBERS OF THE

Carpenters

G. H. P.

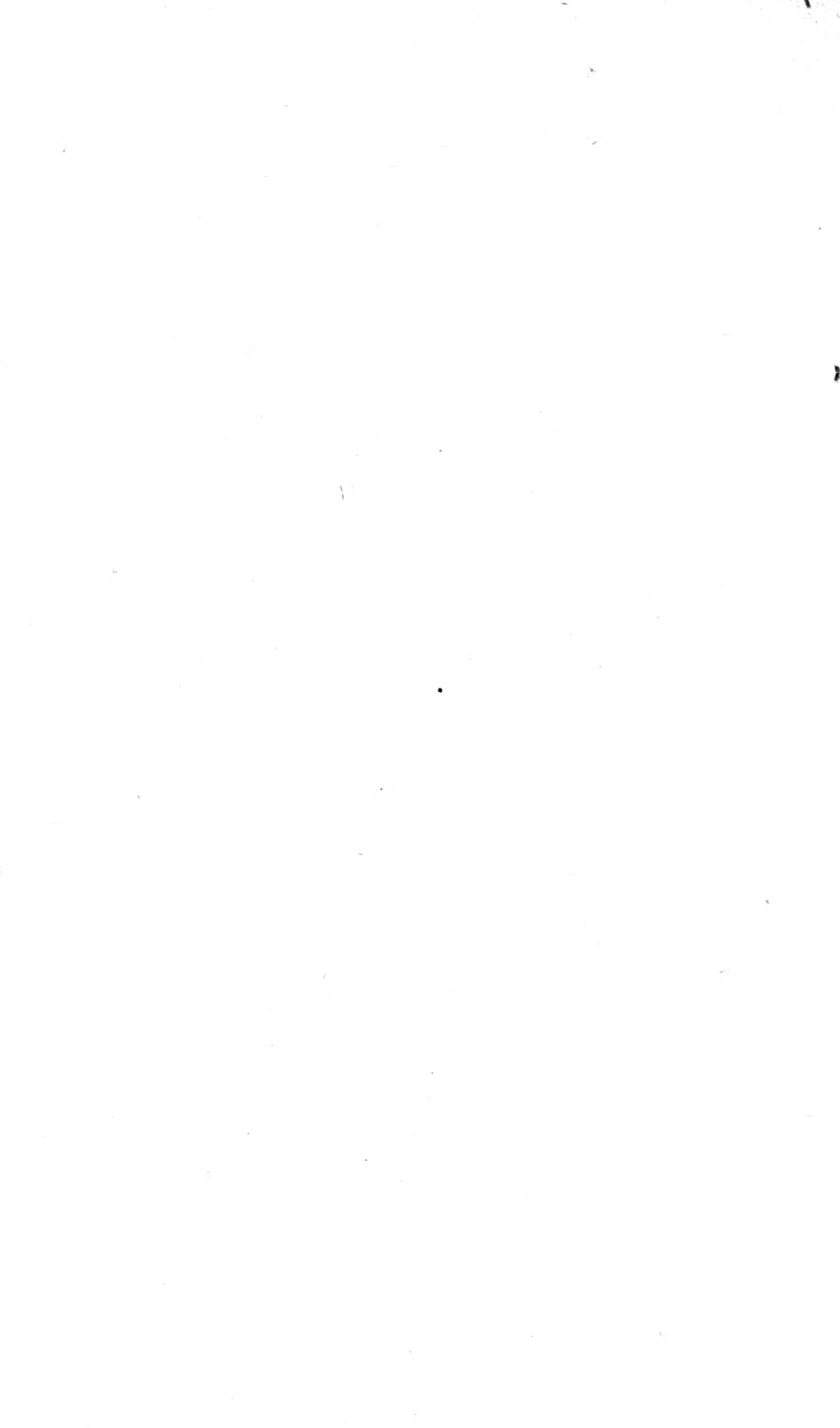
TO

EDEN PHILLPOTTS

A rare gardener, a lover of the wild, a faithful chronicler  
of the lives of simple serving men and home-bred women.  
In grateful recognition of his good friendship I offer  
this sheaf of gleanings from Eastern Woods and Fields.

C. B. L.

TORQUAY.



## PREFACE

To travel with ease and gain esteem interfere with no man's private opinions or affairs ; offer no resistance to any one till you are actually assailed ; be kind, simple, smile where you can ; be interested, but not over curious ; dignified, but by no means proud ; accept hospitality according to local custom ; and, without showing signs of wealth, pay your way. Any one who will observe these few rules may go where he likes, and stay as long as he likes in any country. \_

The foregoing was written some years ago ; but in Eastern Asia I found I might not be frank and open and at the same time accepted at my own value. I did not go to Japan with the object of writing a book with any high purpose, but I had not been long in the country before I saw that the truth was not liked any more than it is liked in other countries ; also, I saw that some truths did not appear to have been discerned or examined at all, and as these involved subjects to which I have some claim to speak with authority, I

felt I should take upon myself the task of telling Japan, her friends, and her rivals, a little of their own business.

The reader may discover that I have made an impartial statement of the visible fortune, needs, and duties of Japan ; also I have dealt with the Japanese as Nature worshippers, gardeners, artists, and handicraftsmen, as I see them superior and worthy to be studied and followed by Europeans. My humours—good, bad, and indifferent—find a place here, for I believe in nothing so much as self-expression. In Japan I was alone, but employed, and my labours and the opinions they imposed form the substance of this volume.

Without any axe to grind, I maintain that this little book holds some facts of interest and value for Japanese statesmen, students, and publicists at home and abroad. Incidentally it should have value for tree lovers, gardeners, artists in landscape, students of design, and naturalists in various fields, not so much for what it describes as for what it suggests and offers to them ; also it may inform and amuse the general reader ; but, above all, it is a book for the Japanese, and for those who are qualified and desirous of serving Japan.

The differences, barriers, prejudices of which the Japanese make such loud complaint are natural, and not to be removed by mere juggling with conceits.



Nor will treaties, school fellowships, and universal hobnobbing change blood, dimensions, or ideals, and make for the desired oneness of Asia and Europe. Race improvement is a slow, natural process, and it were well for the Japanese to recognize and act upon the fact. The Japanese claim for equality is emphatically a vanity based on his own misconceptions, the false praise which has been bestowed upon him, and the dishonourable treatment he has received from the United States of America. The latter repudiated their treaty giving Japanese equality of rights and interests with Europeans. Further, the British oversea dominions refuse the unrestricted immigration of the Japanese.

The purpose of this note is to express the conviction that unless the subject is debated in the most vulnerable and effective quarters, the Japanese will go to war over racial equality alone. They do not want more territory or more of anything half as much as they want to avenge what they consider an insult, and to have the world know and not forget that they are as good as other people. For all good may mean to us and the Japanese, I have the frankness to write that they are making an egregious mistake.

One can appreciate the United States and some of our self-governing dominions for indicating their feel-

ings and intentions towards the Japanese ; but the whole truth has not been said in any quarter, nor has there been reasoned and unprejudiced effort put forward to examine the nature of the barriers and the origin of the prejudices (if any) which provide the mental and physical conflict between Asia and Europe—or Europe and Asia, for the words need to be transposed at times. In strictest truth it is not East and West that Japan finds barriers and prejudices, it is East and South—America and Australasia. The necessity exists for those people who refuse citizenship to Japanese to make a joint statement, and give their reasons for exclusion. The Americas, Australasia, the African Union, these are the territories against which Japan is mentally, and may soon be physically and materially, at war.

The Japanese is convinced that we dislike him for his smallness of stature ; his Mongolian, Esquimaux, or Malayan features ; his love of nakedness ; his license in love and his bartering of women, where, as a matter of fact, we do not as a race know of these things, or where we do, are we concerned to fear these things. We are experienced enough to know that in our social and domestic life we include all the sins and shortcomings of the race. So near as I can find words to express my inmost feelings, the antipathy, prejudice—

call it what we will—is bred in us out of the difference between Wild and Tame. To the European the Japanese is a wild or primitive man.

It is a strange fact for Europeans to contemplate, that whereas Old Japan was a matchless example of patience, resignation, and self-containment, New Japan is impatient, scornful of its old system and those aliens who have effected the change. This nervous and profitless haste is largely bred out of contact with America. The Japanese publicist is as anxious to be public as his father was to be private. Publicity is a mere craze, a mania in New Japan. Of course there is a business side to this clamour for equality, and the right to dwell and trade everywhere ; but the underlying cause of the resentment is due to what has been said by Europeans of the Japanese as a race.

The energy and persistence of the Japanese is a pronounced characteristic. It would take much searching to discover an equally industrious people ; and this forces an inquiry which may with reason be applied to many other peoples, white and coloured : What is to be done with all this energy ? It is no more possible to lock up and calm a vast mass of human energy than it is to arrest a flood which has gained momentum on a mountain side. Wars are the outcome of surplus

energy, and the modern lust for trade is as real as the older form of lust for dominion.

Already Japan has imitated too much. She is not like Europe or America in her resources and opportunities, any more than she resembles them in her commercial and social employments. Old Japan was all country ; New Japan is all town, and much the inferior. I mean that all that is new in the way of effort is in the towns. Impatience is a defect in Japan ; she is inclined to oppose what she most desires. Here she reveals her primitiveness, her link with the springs of life.

To Europeans Japan is a sort of theatre, a holiday haunt, a field of enterprise, a place for speculation ; and the place is the people. This is an important assertion, for all seem to stop at the people and fail to examine their resources and their needs. Alien students of Japan and Japanese students in alien countries have added no substance to Japan. The growth must come from a systematic attack on the high and broad surface of the country, and the volume and value of that growth will be in proportion to the length of time that Japan persists in studying and applying a more European mode of life to the whole of her people.

I am personally incapable of preferring town em-

ployments and town life to those possible to a well-ordered countryside, but in Japan I do not discern a well-ordered countryside. Japanese rural life is a drab drudgery, and little more. To improve the Japanese people, the Japanese must of themselves improve their employments. This has nothing to do with barriers or outside prejudices, and if the Japanese are not in all ways capable enough to imitate and carry through a new system, they should be sensible and unselfish enough to let others come amongst them to put them on the right road.

In various parts of this volume I have set down in plain, and what I trust may prove informing, words as much as may suggest the nature of Japan as a commercial store, and how that store may be accurately and easily estimated and put to use. Chapters XIII., XVIII., and XIX. bear directly on these subjects. Chapters VII., X., XI., and XV. are of value to gardeners. Those interested in mere descriptions and the lighter incidents of travel and adventure may turn to Chapters IV., V., VIII., XII., and XVI.

As I have written before, I had no high resolve to write a book on Japan; but as I found the country and the people full of interest, and both deserving of all the support the outside world may afford them, I have

ventured to publish my experiences, discoveries, and candid though well-meant opinions.

The reader will find causes and explanations of my sometimes contradictory assertions, but he will not find that I have tampered with facts, misjudged my premises, or concealed myself. I do not remember passing an equal period of time with a strange people and coming by so little positive and contagious humour. Humour is not a strong point of the Japanese, and if one would assert one's own, it might prove offensive; so for these reasons my story is not so highly coloured, gay, or whimsical as might be expected of an irresponsible mortal in Japan.

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# THE HARVEST OF JAPAN.

## CHAPTER I.

### CHIYO—EARTH AND SEA.

THE first pages of my manuscript book, soiled with the flower stains of a tropic island, made it easy to commence my story. For a week the *Chiyo Maru* had steamed at full speed and revealed no land. Two ships we saw ; but like our own, they had been lonely so long as to be shy, waving no flag nor raising any cheer as we sped by. Water, water, before and behind us, about and beyond the circled horizon ; sunlight and flakes of foam ; flying-fish and glorious blue creature-like waves ; mysterious nerve-shaking winds ; airs born of some great, pulsating, threatening power ; languorous heat ; dews that damped like rain ; hot fogs ; a gathering in of the garments of ocean ; a cloaking with white, the whitest, idlest clouds ; morning, noon, evening, and night the same, and for days the same : these were our

familiar things ; these enslaved, depressed, sustained us, whilst crossing the most seductive of all oceans—the Pacific.

Chiyo means Earth and Sea. Devoid of earth, we sailed by sky and sea ; not that the heavens were glorious, but they led us on. Never did I remember so many morns devoid of soul sustenance, nor so many successive evenings that gave no hint of prayerful thankfulness, and it is thanks we would give everywhere. When I look back over my days, when I think of the broad earth and round, rolling ocean, gladness and the spirit of praise precede each new rising joy. I can remember the best only. I can say it is well, when I remember that I have seen well. I wish I could find readers for a book on my many good fortunes ; I wish I could say, to be heard, that fortune is no myth nor seeable nor holdable, but ever in some near-by fairyland of our making ; I wish I could bring the world to see that whatsoever enlargeth a man maketh him wise to his everlasting delight ; I wish I might say that the splendid part of life is a private, unseen, unnameable thing. Time, private time—that is all we need.

Although I live largely out of love of other men's beliefs and labours, I dislike quoting from them, or

planning to live by them ; they help me to see, but not what they see. But here I admit that Swinburne had taught me to disregard all terrors of the sea. All my life I had dreaded water ; its power alarmed and overwhelmed me. I could not think of the sea or a ship without mental and bodily pains. My nerves could never endure motion, my nostrils grew cold and my tongue foul at the thought of a sea voyage. Now all had changed. I neither feared nor sickened at the sight, sound, or motion of waves, or the heave and throb of a great ship. Swinburne's "Triumph of Time" absolved me from fear and pain. His love of the sea made me love it too. Far out on a wide ocean, where a great spirit voice sigheth and moaneth always, I was expectant of a rare land and a strange people, yet I did not fear the two thousand miles or so of water dividing me from Japan.

With land far off and more travelled men about me, I felt I had seen little, travelled less ; yet, what distances, what a life of voyaging, up and down, across, askew, out and home, out and home, round and round, oceans, continents, islands and larger islands, seas and seas. Ships, trains, and caravans, each and all by turns had borne me, a mere bit of baggage, pushed on and pushed off, borne on and borne over waters and land.

Travel it is, or no travel at all, according as one sees, thinks, feels, and estimates. The traveller's mission changes from age to age ; his implementa and his gains change too. Neither love of gold nor curiosity nor vanity kept me moving on. Mine was the pilgrim quest always—to see, to understand, to rejoice, to pay homage, to return with a reinvigorated soul : these were my hopes, and often I realized them. Until a few months ago, I went on and on in fear and trembling. I could not trust the sea. I could discern no spirit, no sense of life, no cleansing and sustaining power in waters, warm or cold, calm or raging, foam crowned, sun flamed, sapphire, or emerald starred. But the ocean had become a part of me—bed and pillow, cradle, couch and easy-chair, rest of all resting-places. Distance and time, horizon and horizon, all were one. Ocean is home ; ocean is the bond linking all lands.

Ten days after leaving the tropic island, I awoke before daylight and went to see the time ; it was four-twenty-five. Later came the dawn, and a true Japanese sun rose above the sea—a globe of glowing red, rimmed with shimmering gold. The water was quiet, the ship noisy, as if feeling the sense of additional life as she neared land. I marched the various decks alone. North—no land ; west—no land. Only one small

sailing craft above the line of the sea. By-and-by came up the sailormen, who said we might see land by seven o'clock. I went and packed and ordered my kit. I dressed with a new sense hanging outside me. I was glad, grateful, humble, in a sense that was uplifting. I will own that I thought that hailed ships do not always come to land ; that anchors are dropped, handkerchiefs waved, and dead men borne ashore. Still, I felt I must see Japan. I had come to discern and worship, and I could not recall a story or a time when the altar had passed at the approach of the pilgrim. " Shrines and pilgrims, shrines and pilgrims," I said aloud, and could not help repeating.

I saw the Japanese women passengers looking out anxiously, in spite of the assurance that neither they nor the men nor the children must display joy or fear at what may come or fail to come to them. All the concerns of the ship were discarded, all the close friendships were broken. The packed trunks and the land ahead made the world for most of us.

I wrote these lines in the saloon before eight o'clock, then I paced the decks looking and waiting for the promised land. The sun forced down the mist, the air grew warm, the sea smooth of surface and softer of tone. At a quarter to eight land was sighted—a long

jagged ridge, and this was all we saw for nearly two hours ; then breaks in the coast-line occurred, and weird fishing craft, one with a hundred men or more, who seemed to be astride a tree and ladling of something—edible weed. By ten o'clock we saw islands, and a well-defined background of inland hills. Pines and the richest of green herbage decked the cones, pinnacles, and flat ledges ; these were in thousands. Never before had I seen so many details of form within the compass of a few miles.

As we entered the Bay of Yokohama, three islands converted to forts lay across our path ; but we went on at full speed, anxious to get out of a dangerous current before it should cause our ship to become unmanageable. The economy of this harbour did not concern me. It looked modern enough ; the forts hard as adamant. Little boats crowded our course ; steamers ran by on either side ; queer, slave-hunting looking craft luffed and raced by turns. Villages lined all the coast, and the sun and the soft air kept us more and more capable of thought and feeling. At first all the beauty was on the north side ; then it came from the west, and remained till we were at the end of the voyage.

The first impressions were of the cause of the beautifully moulded coast-line. Of sedimentary origin, it

had been tossed and tumbled by volcanic action, and modelled by the disturbing winds and seas. The plainer parts of this coast-line correspond with the land lying along the Sussex and Hampshire coast—perpendicular walls of white and yellow sandstone, intersected by green grassy slopes, clumps of pine, little fields and vales, and water-slips choked up with almost black cottages, fisher-folk and their concerns.

By-and-by we were surrounded by great ships of war, another reminder of the English Channel; but we were in a bay only three miles wide at its mouth, though opening up till we could see no land to the north or east. Instead, we saw what may have numbered thousands of fishing-boats, each with a square-topped, flounced sail. These sails alone were visible above the water, and queer objects they appeared, like black targets ranged over the green and silver bay. We did not see what is known as the black current—at least, the water was no blacker than before; and once in the Bay of Yokohama, the water was a dull green, such as one sees most often on such a coast, or where there is a sand bottom, no great depth of water, and not much weed. Before noon we sighted Yohohama—chimneys and smoke, ships and sails in the offing, wooded hills, with European and native houses showing

here and there. More villages and ever more fishing craft crowded by the shore.

Besides these, we had the interest of the Japanese on board. From early morn they had trudged and shuffled about in their best attire ; and what a lot of rare garb they brought forth ! It seemed impossible they could have lived in America or Hawaii for years, and preserve so many curious, beautiful, and perfect clothes to the smallest details. In fact, it was harder to believe that they had been out of Japan for a single day. How sure of themselves they were ! How completely they disregarded us Europeans ! I do not say there was indifference amounting to rudeness, but we were made to feel that they had the first right in all things thereabouts.

I hastened round and paid my debts, and made myself safe in the matter of time. I went among the women and the babies, playing with the youngsters by turns. I looked and looked to make sure I was in Japan or by its shore. My shipmates were strangers almost ; each was looking for his own, and I saw mine in the new, the old, the favoured land—favoured of tree and flower, of strange things to be sought—so my trust increased as I came to breathe a softer and more sustaining air. I went ashore as a husbandman looking for rare fields,



in which I might toil and feel I owned them for a season. I would, as a friend said, come to feel that I had been steeped in the better things.

Soon after noon I got ashore with my companions—five horned toads from Mexico and South California. These excited much more wonder than I. In fact, I excited no wonder at all. That is well. To come among people who make no sign of observing a stranger is to know they have employment and life within themselves. A rickshaw man took me to a house, and soon I was out of it again, too anxious to see my new people to endure a house on European lines, as the Japanese host proclaimed his to be.

Yokohama is termed the front door of Japan, and it is the business of all the country to keep the door wide open. All the country means all the world—all the foreign busy people, all the search-after-happiness sort ; and perhaps I was one, and no steadier than the rest, for it is hard to go slowly or to leave off talking when in the presence of new things. So in the hotel one could not be private, detached, alone, befriended of new friends, the Little People of Japan. My room, though large, was dark and depressing. The water-works were not working, and a notice ran : A supply of water will be suspended to-morrow during repairs.

I could afford to laugh ; but I found myself so conservative as to refuse to call a waiter Boy, and I lifted my eyebrows when a girl, whose status I could not define, said she was the Boy of the house.

Our ship's doctor was in love with a lady nurse on a leper island, and before leaving the ship I wrote, at his request, a sort of rhymed love-letter, and in return he gave me a large packet of Epsom salt. Perhaps this had prepared me for some of the whimsical and opposite things one encounters in Japan.

In a rickshaw I was hurried through the streets of the native town, in no sense large—a square mile or two—the houses not much more than huts and wigwams. In truth, there was a great deal more in their character, variety, restraint, and perfect workmanship ; but one must be simple in one's tastes and desires to discern their excellencies. To myself I said : A thousand things in Japan may not have my concern ; I must ignore everything foreign to the native people and the native land ; I will be as prejudiced as you please, for what I do not believe in I do not see or dwell upon. So my tale must be of native life, native scenery, native charm, and native love—for I can dwell on no land where love is not the mainspring of life.

Very soon I made a start, or was started. Of course,

I could smile out of the joy of my first day in such a land, and my happiness seemed to be contagious, for not only women and girls, but boys and men smiled and laughed at nothing as merrily as I. This was the fair, the right beginning. Nothing cut and dried, nothing according to plan, or planned to occur. I will own that most of what I saw in the first day was not new. One might not expect entirely foreign scenes in a commercial city of Japan, nor hope for any characteristics other than those born of Buddhistic and Shinto faiths. All shrines are made for one and the same people—those who would live and bow in faith and fear. At once I saw a people governed by natural and superstitious instincts ; their failings not so important as their virtues. I was not bent on looking through the lattice wood doors, the transparent paper walls and windows, the tea houses and gaming houses, for the sake of describing flies in rancid ointment. It was no business of mine to be Paul Pry or Master Scandal. I have lived to see and know how the world lives, and where I live on a low plane I can discern a good deal worthy to be termed life.

Here I was soon convinced that I should come by life—my sole concern. I would touch the pulse and live out of the heart-beats of my fellows. During my

first day I rode and walked the streets, bowed at a Shinto shrine, which, like all shrines, occupied a beautiful spot—the crown of a high, narrow cone, whence one saw over miles of lovely artificial landscape, for Japanese wealth is in beauty ; and where the tree and the grass and the wild vine thrive, so will other things, and these man must make the most of, as he lives out of the sum of the earth. I stood and gazed until I could endure the varied scene no longer ; then I turned, and at my feet, a little paradise for believing and wearied pilgrims. I believed, I had wearied, and now I was at home. It was ever so with me ; I needed the hallowed place, born of beauty, stilled with peace.

I confess but ten minutes before I had refreshed me with a cup of tea at the house of Five Hundred Steps, or some such name ; and there, though the tea was fresh and the room a sort of sanctuary, I had been regaled by three or four girls, two of whom took hold of me literally, and endeavoured to keep me fast to earth by sitting upon my knees. But not these or experiences of their kind alter a man who is out convinced of what he wants. I know my road and the so-called dangers thereof ; I can encounter no dangers so long as there is no danger in me. With an open hand, an eager eye, and no certain knowledge of the things

which charmed and made me glad, I went into no details. I pried not, neither did I wonder; and I will say that as a man travels on, he loves and rejoices more but wonders less, till he comes to wonder not at all. He knows, and he knows that he knows, enough for him and his purpose. When he has come to live out of himself, he cares not at all what others see and feel, or how or why they see and feel. His sensations splendid, he has come by his own, and there is no more to be desired or given away.

So I proclaim that my first day was a good one. To my rickshaw man I said, "Keep to the old parts, and do not tell me what the new and big buildings are, or I'll pay you and leave you: I do not want a guide. I wish you to go slowly, and enjoy your time with me if you can. Don't think about me." I had three rickshaw men on that day, and I trained each in such a way as possibly to spread a new belief amongst their numbers—a belief that somewhere in the Far West exists a race or a cult who do not believe in anything better than going on quietly and dreaming idly, whilst apparently wide awake when it comes to settling up at the end of the journey.

That night I was carried to Theatre Street, where a feast of trees and other living things is held on the

fifth and twentieth of each month. Besides dwarfed trees and plants, trained into fanciful and artistic shapes, there were many popular flowers ; common poppies in tiny pots appeared uncommonly beautiful ; also columbines, marigolds, pansies, and azaleas. These predominated, though there were many cacti, ferns, and primulas in great variety. What impresses most is the sense of the desire to be near to Nature, no matter how dense the population or darksome and griming the employment. In Japan, no one lives unconscious of the country. That is a truth incalculable in its power for good, in so far as a nation has ideals and determination to live out of a sane understanding of natural things. Statecraft is useless without handicraft ; and no nation goes forward when it is bred in towns so large, complex, terrifying, and overpowering that escape to any unpeopled or natural spot proves it the least natural, and makes of it the most forbidding and fearful place.

In this street of stalls and jugglers, fakirs and mystery makers, contrivers of toys and tawdry stuff, were thousands of living things worthy of one's time and attention. The dwarfed trees were miracles of insight and achievement ; but lest I run on these to surfeit, I will put a thick black dot to the subject, and say it is dealt

with in chapters dealing with Japanese tree artists and their work.

At a stall I bought a tiny shrine of old gold lacquer, doors and Buddha complete, the figure and its pedestal of solid metal, the whole about six inches high—an old and genuine piece, cost about a shilling. Also I bought a piece of chased ivory—a Nutsuki—fit for a girdle, for about the same sum ; and three tiny brass tobacco pipes cost a shilling the lot.

These were my substantial additions to life during my first half day in Japan.

## CHAPTER II.

### A JOURNEY TO SENDAI.

IN Japan I would examine her natural features, the employment of the land, study Japanese gardening and native methods of dwarfing and designing trees and miniature landscapes. These led me to some outlandish places, amongst others to the town of Sendai and the Archipelago of Matsushima, or the region of the Pine Islands. Matsu is a pine tree, and shima or jima signifies an island. Matsushima is justly proclaimed one of the three great natural beauty and wonder spots of Japan ; the others are Miajima (Temple Island) in the Inland Sea, and Ama-no-Hashidate (Heavenly Bridge) near Miyazu.

The second-class carriage was perfectly clean and the fare cheap, two hundred and forty miles or so for about nine shillings. At the junction for Nikko, two or three porters went up and down shouting, "Forty winks here ; forty winks here !" or something like ;



and as I had not to change trains, I took the hint and browsed awhile. Every one was allowed to smoke everywhere. In fact, every one was allowed to do much as he liked everywhere. I noted rare trust. A young man counted some paper money, put it in a canvas bag, and laid it on the long side seat, which ran without a break the full length of each carriage, and was exasperating in that one had to sit atwist to catch a glimpse of anything. The young man left the carriage two or three times, and paid no attention to his money-bag till it was time to leave ; neither did any one else. I left my hold-all at Yokohama, and thought by the quiet way things moved I might get my luggage within a week, if at all, for it was without name or address ; and though I had to sleep without pyjamas and go with my hair uncombed the next morning, the luggage came safely by the train following mine.

A soldier-like officer was in the train. He was curious at my writing notes, and at the way I scanned things. This made him anxious to exchange cards with me. Mine is usually a luggage or plant label or a seed envelope, for I carry these things everywhere, and they serve a variety of uses. So I wrote my name on a plant label and gave it to him. He was bamboozled, and, I believe, a little less polite. He knew a dozen

words in English, so I asked him the height of some mountains we were passing. "Nine ov clock," he replied; and again I asked, to get again, "Nine ov clock"—the hour of arrival at Sendai. Then he inquired, "Have you any provision?" He meant profection, as I knew; but I said, "Yes, brown bread and sardines." Whereupon he fell over his own indignation, gave himself a most painful though metaphorical kick, and sat down sulky with himself for a season.

Over most of the way the land had a smooth, soft face; there were few rocks exposed, the most precipitous hills and mountains were covered with dense and softening vegetation. As we went north I was forced to say aloud, "Companionable and supporting hills," for they spread a wondrous array. On some snow lay in streaks and patches; it crowned the high peaks, it drifted into river-like streams against the rising sun. Bare and clothed highlands caught the colours of the afternoon clouds, and a perfect heaven towered and invited, till I could not breathe freely, so impatient was I to get nearer to the high and gorgeous spaces.

Here I saw azaleas growing wild for the first time, forming the undergrowth of woods, grouping themselves as vagrant weeds round cottages, and brighten-

ing all the low hills. The most common colours were terra-cotta and rose; but there were reds and whites, creams, and a variety of pinks and deep copper tones at intervals. Too late for spring flowers in Yokohama (early May), it was now so cold that many deciduous plants had not put forth their leaves, and the glories of the spring were yet to be. It would be impossible to number or describe the hills, cones, ridges, mounds, vales, streams, and pools composing a single view of this northern landscape. It reveals scenes resembling the north and central part of Portugal, the north-west and the central parts of Ireland, the north-west of Spain, Southern Italy, La Landes of France, Ceylon hill country, Java, the north of New Zealand; and yet Northern Japan remains distinct, unique in the form and influence of its landscapes.

“*Shellwearivus ett nefefftin*—we shall arrive at nine-fifteen,” so said the ticket-puncher. That evoked the thought that, as it takes time to say anything well, it takes a Japanese no time to make sure he knows what he thinks he ought to know. Two little boxes of stuff, one hot boiled rice and the other cold, I bought on the train, provided my first meal and some discomfort. The box of cold stuff held eight forms of food, only one of which I could identify—ginger-root, dyed with

cochineal or beetroot. The other stuff was a julep of smooth, solid white paste, raw fish and rice I should say ; two or three green roots, some piped, others solid ; seeds like black beans or earth nuts ; some weed or sedge root ; a nasty wrinkled and fretted material which I took for a rotten sponge, fungi, or the gills of a big fish. I nibbled and sucked and chewed a bit of each, overwhelming every bad bite by stuffing my mouth with rice. But at last the flavours impressed all my tongue and tasting organs, so that I was glad to make a vicious bite at the ginger and grind it fiercely, till it brought raging hot tears to my eyes. This made me desperate, and I determined to swallow every blessed thing that had offended my palate. The white, slimy paste I could not stomach, and I felt the little black nuts or seeds would come again if I ate any more, so these I gave a free passage through the carriage window, and set to work upon the rest. To write truly, I woke that night with a strong desire to vomit ; and though I lay still, I know that had I got out of bed I should have been in trouble with myself.

At Sendai, although lodged in what was termed a first-class hotel, I was served with all my fare on a tray. There was neither fire nor fireplace, brazier nor hot water. Swearing was useless, as no one understood,

and it would be vulgar and debasing to complain. I was cold to the bone, and I feared an illness if I did not get warmer. Fancy a town with over one hundred thousand souls, and not a street lamp or chimney! I had met similar conditions elsewhere, but I could not bring myself to think that Japan would soon improve on these dark ways of living.

The children's garb here was wonderful in its commingling of rags and colours. A military town, Sendai was in its new part all march, march, march, bugle bray and retire, from morn till night. The air was biting in full sunshine, so like a soldier I had to march to get warm. I craved a fire, and as that was impossible, my only chance was to walk the streets of little shops, all the same in their medley and nondescript character. There were many bookshops, and thousands of second-hand volumes of English. How did they get to such a place, and for whom were they intended? Rain fell in torrents, and I was glad, for it brought out the folk in their high pattens, straw coats, *mâché* umbrellas, sheets of oiled paper, and no end of temporary screens; though one should not write temporary, as the rain threatened to remain everlasting. It snows here every day from November to March, and there is not a wood fire in the town, though dense forests all around.

I called on a Japanese friend ; his house was the first where I removed my boots. It is odd that with the frequent removal of boots and outer clothing in draughty places one does not catch cold, and one soon loses the fear that one may take a cold. Japanese courtesy is a strange thing to estimate. To its own it is genuinely attentive, but it does not make any concession to the stranger. I got very good treatment from a native at Sendai, but he insisted that I should remove my boots before entering his house. He sent me round the town, and the rickshaw man asked me if I was tired of sight-seeing by affecting the attitude of sleep. His bow was the best thing I saw in Sendai. It came from my giving him a yen, double or treble what he might have demanded. I am no autocrat, but I like respect, and I like to earn it. My man had earned his money, and I had earned the right to pay him. His anxiety to be guide as well as horse was quite valiant, and he gave me the history of Sendai ; but of course I was no wiser.

At a children's playground was a full-length tree, sixty feet or so, swung on chains just above the ground, that children might balance themselves and move the log in all directions.

I stumbled on a festival at a Shinto shrine, a most primitive exhibition, and though many details were in-

teresting, I could not pursue to explain the varied performances. One was a very ancient dance, the figure masked, with the face on what should have been the crown of the head, and carrying a fan and spirit-quelling ring. I watched the offerings to the shrine—coppers thrown on a large padded platform—the giver pulling a rope to sound a gong that some ear might hear and answer, or remember to forgive. In the porch of the temple a man was auctioning poultry, and another was making a stream of copper coins pass from hand to hand, so it was exactly like Christ in the Temple.

At this festival women were selling tiny pancakes—bits of blistered dough and dollups of sickly yellow and purple slime—the Turkish Delight of Young Japan. As there was a shortage of coppers, I offered some to several children. Each took what I gave, looked aside furtively, turned the hand, and dropped the coin on the ground. That and no more. I stooped to pick up one or two coins ; but the old stall women regarded me with enmity, so I allowed them to gather up the money. It is only fair to say that after this irregular system of trade they became generous, and distributed several tit-bits amongst the empty mouths ranged round.

The oldest streets and lanes of Sendai revealed

nothing worse than silent and of necessity industrious folk. Town-bred rats, they must needs be burrowing, seeking protection, food, and a little light. The Japanese do not seem to recognize what we term dullness. They have an unusual capacity for sitting or kneeling quiet, doing and thinking of nothing at all. When night comes they do not light up, fire up, or wake up for any special kind of work or merriment. Sometimes, when at lonely and remote inns, I wanted the maid or the mistress to talk, or work, or listen—tell me of her misfortunes, anything human, domestic, linked with the eternal ebb and flow of life—but no news or extra numbers came to me.

When night comes the streets grow to be of the blackest; also they are silent to beget awe. When I ventured abroad in the dark and came within hearing or discerning another soul, we usually stood still, each on one leg, that we might all the better listen and sniff out the character of the other monster in the dark. Japanese clogs and pattens enable their wearers to make queer shuffling sounds, with no hint of sex or size of wearer. Always I felt I was imitating a cumbrous and benighted black beetle, and I could do nothing safer than imitate him. Sometimes we decided that we were equally evil spirits, to be avoided rather than to be



embraced. He, if it was a he, would emit a far away sound of great strength and great courage, to which I'd respond with my countering challenge, which may be summed up in understandable English as "I'm your Moses."

But I liked the feeling so well as never to feel afraid, and that feeling arose from the rare distance in Time of the sound or sounds. Alarm, surprise, a plea put forth in the dark prompts the most primitive noises of which humanity is capable. Laughter, as it escapes some throats, carries us back a long way; but laughter is a comparatively modern accomplishment. I incline to believe that man ejaculated, muttered, chanted, long before he spoke or came to interpret himself in words, and that he did not give way to laughter till civilization had shown him enough of his own folly to tickle him into a fit.

I was impressed by the fact that the town people did not use the country. The hills round Sendai were beautiful in form and well wooded; also they were trackless, and, except by the peasant wood-cutter and charcoal-burners, they remained untrodden. The people wished to impress me with the fact that they had many modern schools. I didn't want them, or to hear of them even. Fool factories, that is what I call them.

One hundred and eighty schoolgirls from fourteen to eighteen years of age came in pouring rain to pass a day and night in our hotel. It had seemed that the house was full already. What patience those girls displayed as they stood in the storm-swept space before the house waiting for arrangements to be made! They were frozen blue and red with cold, yet they looked cheerful. Each carried a tiny bag or bundle in a handkerchief. Their dresses were all the same, plum colour; nothing conspicuous about them, nothing feminine; to my way of judging there was not a pretty one. There were many good, honest faces, and such as one might grow to like, but no real freshness or beauty.

I wanted to move on, but the rain fell in sheets and unceasingly, so I gave myself to writing and inspecting the house.

The schoolgirls and their rooms formed very pretty pictures; they filled the largest chambers, which were elegant and stately as those in any palace. A wonderful decorum was observed by the girls. I was afraid to go to bed, as with so many wet garments hanging over the braziers it seemed impossible that the house should escape fire.

On leaving Sendai I disputed my bill, then paid it, still disputing. The landlord's only excuse was, "Very

cold here." I agreed, and I believe that the reminder made me feel extra mean. I find it more difficult to travel with than without money. This is a true statement. I cannot endure being looked after and looked out for ; I will not allow any one to stand in the way of my seeing and going, so money is a blinding and a bothering factor. When begging my way I was compelled to move slowly, for I had to earn and deserve support, so that I made friends and felt secure in almost all places.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE ISLANDS, FLORA, AND LIFE OF MATSUSHIMA.

BETWEEN Sendai the frozen and Shiogama the enchanting I passed through the loveliest of hill and valley, stream and village scenery. But may I get writer's cramp and a stiff neck if I write any more about Japanese scenery. And yet that is the chief product and profit of the country. People—always my concern—were not attractive nor interesting enough to absorb me quite. I was in the process of adapting myself to Japanese conditions, and not having succeeded in making myself comfortable, I was in a state of incipient revolt. The Japanese have no god of soft seats, nor any hero honoured so high as to sit in a chair. All their Happy Gods lie about supported by their hips and elbows, whilst the heroes and heroines kneel or perch, or lie prone and prostrate, on their distinguished and visible corporations. These are all homely attitudes, and they fit in with the rest of Japan, but they are not convenient and comforting to Europeans.

A chair is more than a necessity to some of us. I have a desire and a feeling for chairs which might lead me to write an insinuating essay on seats—easy and low, high and upright. A chair makes for security, and of all the chambers made by man, there is not one to invite and claim and bless till we have a chair therein. But I will own that I had not been a week in Japan before I found it comforting to kneel or to lie on my side to write or take my meals. There were tables quite nine inches high, and on the floor rare flat cushions at least three inches thick; and I was regularly invited to compose my honourable body over the honourable floor, which I managed to do without upsetting the honourable household. But social and domestic life in Japan keep one so near the foundation of things that in this, as in so many other experiences, one feels that one is sharing life older than all history, yet a sure, and in some ways a rare and blessed, life.

To survey the Pine Islands and the great Archipelago of Matsushima I had to charter a native craft at the dreamlike village or little town of Shiogama. It lay crouched and perched and half hidden between and about rocks and dells, tumbling streams, and a reach of salt water. I was dumb and defenceless; but every one bowed, and by bowing the boat was chartered,

and we sailed away. That voyage must remain a rare memory. The boatman and I could not converse, but we broke bread and chocolate together ; he pointed at rare objects and I smiled ; we idled and laughed ; now and then I pulled a rope, and though it might have been the wrong one, he was equally well pleased. So we sailed and sailed.

I like a boat big enough to carry another, as I am no swimmer ; but this boat seemed as if built for emergencies, for she was slack and detachable everywhere above the water line, and I felt that without much wrenching I could take my plank with me if a wave or a squall sent me overboard. I made no effort to count the islands in their manifold beauties—they are over two hundred. The best things in Nature—their influence upon us—never may be described. Most of the islands are mere piles of coarse, conglomerate, and smooth, creamy-white sandstone, a medium ensuring fantastic and beautiful forms in variety when subjected to the fretting and moulding influences of wind and wave. Out among the islands one feels that one is exploring a ruined and partly submerged city, for many rocks represent arches, ships, causeways, towers, ruined forts, and deserted gardens, smooth-faced windowless houses and barns in great variety. Many of these

islands are roofed with a thatch of dark peat and living pine trees, which in their struggles for existence assume every angle of growth and degree of tenacity, so that one fears and strives with them, so many are the signs of danger and despair. This persistent appeal of the pines naturally enough has been answered by naming the archipelago Matsushima. I was charmed and subdued to silence. In spite of a sense of orientation, I soon lost my bearings, so numerous and varied were the isles and so tricky the wind, that it took us to all points of the circle every few minutes. The sun shone and disappeared at brief intervals, white clouds and storm clouds came and went, and fleets of sampans and timber-carrying barges lay in some of the little bays by the mainland.

When the wind fell the sampan man would take the oar, an immense blade with the stem in two parts lashed to form a bow like a mammoth's rib, that it might roll or wriggle more. Our craft was undoubtedly feminine and in a bad humour, for every time she was rowed into open water or a spot to catch the wind she'd rear up in front, flirt at the stern, and steal into quiet water and idleness again. Afraid of water, and a rank coward when in a little boat, I quailed when a storm pounced down upon us and beat our one big sail into a blob

before the sampan man could let the ties go and pull in. Then he hid me under sail cloth and rush mats, put extra protection over my baggage, and with mighty jerks at the great oar, he pulled for the shelter of a near-by isle. We gained it just in time to see ghost-like eddies and curls of foam where but a few minutes before our boat had been. Without any word from me, the boatman struck out for the most substantial land, creeping from island to island, and at last gaining the mainland, which we hugged for a couple of miles or so, when Matsushima was sighted and soon reached.

The Japanese pay homage to hot water, and if we have made none of them Knights of the Bath we should correct the oversight at once. I had not bathed for a week, nor had a decent wash for four days. I had not seen a towel going a-begging since I came to the country. These things mean something to some of us. The landlord at Matsushima met me with the homage due to hot water. The bath tub was a yard square, a deep butt built to one side of a sort of washhouse ; the other portion of the wall held another tub of cold water. There was a seat in the tub, so that one might rest and pour from a huge ladle piping hot water over oneself. I don't know if the water was virgin pure ; it did not look it, but it felt clean, and it was most refreshing.



I got so hot as to shed all moisture. This was necessary, as the towel was not as large as a pocket-handkerchief.

Most of us think water the blessed element ; in Japan it is the accursed element almost, for the people will be wetting things and never drying them. They wash their hands, flip their fingers, and lo ! magic, their hands are dry. They use no handkerchiefs, and they need 'em badly. Still, too much water. I tried to buy a towel, and they didn't sell them—said instead, “ This is good water.”

My first experience of Japanese fare in a native inn was not alarming. I had fish soup, fish boiled, fish fried, and there was an odour of fish in the plate of rice which forms the bread and mainstay of every meal. Objecting to kneeling over a nine-inch high stool-table, and incapable of tucking my legs under me in a praying mantis attitude, I fell back on the good old Roman custom of lying down to feed. Chopsticks I would have none of, preferring to use my fingers. The delicate beauty and rare quality in everything in the chamber helped me to feel that I was living in state, and the food producing a feeling of cleanness and soundness within, I took courage and ate freely. There is one hard, yellow root they send to table, which they call

*Damme.* I said so twice after taking it once, and then I neither tasted it nor spoke less respectfully of it any more.

Some Japanese puzzles :—They keep fish fresh for days and days without salt, or smoke, or sun, or drying wind. They make no vinegar, but induce certain food-stuffs to go sour till they taste of vinegar. They decorate their dishes with the ugly parts of animals and fish. They eat of practically everything they can find in the sea and on the land, some giving off repulsive odours, and they remain an odourless people.

I shuddered at the thought of eating the sardines spread over the sand to dry. They were by the acre, drawn straight from the sea, and spread but a foot or two above high tide. When dry enough, they were raked into little ridges and covered with matting. There they might lie for weeks getting mellow, and some smelt as if they were already. There is no thought or knowledge of fish poisoning in Japan.

The little town, the cave dwellings, the tombs and engraved stones by the mile, my walks in the woods and on the Holy Island, my home, my first night in a Japanese bed, my stiff neck, my cold, my general fatigue and weariness—these are diary notes, and afford a clear insight of how I saw and felt at Matsushima.

I came here to study Nature, but Man had to be reckoned with and recognized. Several of the islands are regarded as holy, sacred, sepulchral spots, and they are all these truly. For many centuries Japanese warriors, princes, pilgrims, and holy men sought peace and repose here; and very informing and impressive are the thousands of stones, tablets, monuments, rock-cut tombs—memorials of Japanese faith and modes of sepulture. Matsushima remains a place of pilgrimage, a fishing village, a resort of merry-makers, and an exporter of timber and shells—of which all Japanese are very fond.

Sunday is beginning to assert itself in Japan. Boat-loads of people came and went among the islands, a weird pipe or two was heard, the shrines and temples had more patrons, and less work went on among the village and fisher folk. I climbed the highest hill by a road running inland for three or four miles, on the way naming the plants I knew. I talked in nods to peasant folk, and after lunch I lay on my mat and wrote of my experiences in recent days.

Plants wild and abundant round Matsushima :—

Azaleas.  
Camelias.  
Deutzias.

| Wisteria.  
| Spirea—hard and soft-wooded.  
| Pyrus Malus.

Cydonia.	Daisies.
Bambusa—green and bi-colour.	Primula—in great variety.
Ribes—of many forms.	Solomon's Seal—a rare type.
Prunus—of many forms.	Maples.
Lilies—of many forms.	Pines.
Ferns—of rare beauty.	Cedars.
Ampelopsis.	Larch.
Salix.	Anemone.
Quercus.	Geum.
Ilex.	Taxus.
Cryptomeria.	Sumach.
Roses—upright and climbing.	Aucuba.
Rhus.	Celandine.
Rumex.	Asters.
Buxus.	Arborvitæ.
Thuya.	Euonymus.
Citrus Trifoliata.	Lent Lily—one bank held foliage of nine sorts of lily, but I was unable to say what they might be.
Violets—pink, blue, white, and violet.	Chrysanthemums.
Fragaria.	Viburnums—several.
Columbine.	Orchis.
Vines—grape ; several rare, and attractive in leaf and flower.	Arums.
Hazel.	Cerasus.
Rhyncospermum.	Hornbeam.
Clematis.	Bilberry.
Ivy.	St. John's Wort.
Juniper.	Geraniums—of many forms.
Yew.	Dogwood.
Saxifrage—some rare creeping forms.	Morus alba.
Buttercups.	Catalpus.

The dandelion, dock, sorrel, polygonum, and colts-foot are largely represented: some attractive in size, foliage, and flower. The two curses are the bamboo and wisteria. These push through or scramble over

everything, everywhere. A big snake glided about me as I stood in a sort of thicket enumerating these things. I might have put the foregoing plants in order ; but I think it best to list them as they came to me on a single hillside in North-East Japan.

We make or preserve our soil too deep, and therefore too cold, sour, and airless for many of the plants listed here. I saw rare lilies growing in a two-inch layer of peat over sandstone and conglomerate. The air is moist always ; but to the Japanese eye starved plants yield more beauty than those overfed. I saw that shallow pans with peat and broken sandstone and charcoal suit azaleas, camelias, and deutzias better than the deep pots and soils we provide.

At Matsushima I saw a *taxus* tree transplanted. It was fourteen feet high, forty broad, and one hundred and fifty to two hundred years old, its roots confined within a mound less than ten feet in diameter and four feet high. Here also were old pines to twenty feet, with earth balls not two feet in diameter, and not a root showing more than half an inch thick. Mat roots explain and secure this easy handling. In several yards and cottage gardens were old trees in the earth in the process of making. Also potted trees were carried permanently on barges and lake boats. In the woods

were small trees, twisted, broken, and deprived of soil, preparatory to removal.

In Japan nothing can grow upright, if we except the close-set trees of the forest. All the land is atilt, and where the wind does not blow always, the sun and the light dry and draw, or there is an excess of moisture weighing things down. One sees factors of form everywhere, and these are embodied in the eyes and aspirations of the people. I met three little boys in a country lane, two of whom were carrying sprays of azalea ; each held his bough aslant, and bent and tilted it as he went, seeking effect. Our professed gardeners have no power of seeing as much in any branch of a wild or cultivated flower.

I passed through bowers of tree peonies up to eight feet in height ; they seem to thrive best at sea level in the North. The choicest plants and flowers are seen in protected positions, where there is no strong side light ; I noted no forms or colours superior to those known in Europe. The Japanese grow aquilegias (columbines) in pots and pans to produce beautiful effects. I don't know how it may be with others, but when I am far from home I am kept content by the sight of and contact with familiar things, so here I made most of what I had come to regard as my own.

My host proved kinder than he looked. He avoided me as if he disliked my presence, yet he charged fifty sen—a shilling per day—less than he named when I came, and he was most careful in directing the rickshaw men, and telling me of payment due to them. They took me to Matsushima station, which was some miles away, on a glorious morning, the sun breaking through mists and the hills breaking through mists; the bays, the rivers, and the cottages peering through mists. All timid they seemed, all glad and shy and brave and hopeful; for as the sun's eye grew larger it angered less, and the world grew braver till it danced in a riot of beauty.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OUT OF THE INFINITE PAST.

MY train ride from Matsushima to Asamushi took eleven hours. The carriage, made to hold about twenty, never held more than six of us, and had there been another he would have made the Seven Sleepers complete. We slept over most of the way—at least the others did ; I had to keep awake that I might see the country, and this was hard work. Seeing country is hard work always, everywhere. People often tell me I am lucky ; they imagine seeing easy to me and movement to be good for one. It is good for one, but not good for all. To me movement makes a quaking ground of this earth. Movement means saying good-bye not only to people, but to things and to self. Movement means losses everlastingly, wants everlastingly, discomforts everlastingly. I mean this. I am a traveller, no sightseer. I am out to make discoveries—to bind sheaves, not to bear them away. I am to look and often to long, and in longing I am to look again, and



know that I soon shall look no more. I am to see differences ; to find my way and make my way ; I am never and yet always to pay my way. I am to bear a burden and never to lay my burden down ; I am to lay myself down. I am not to count on myself, but count all others for themselves. I am never the paid servant, but the paying master. I am out with strange gifts, offering surprises, accepting of missions. It is nothing how I go. By boat, by train, or afoot, first class or unclassified, I am still the traveller.

Most of all, I am the traveller, because I do not, I will not, conform. I am to see, touch, and live by people and their concerns. I am not to take concern ; their business is none of mine. Never was I busy with an end in view ; never did I set out to come to any one prize. Each land, each place, full and round, I am to estimate its contents and pass on, but it must not pass from me. Years ago I wrote of a tramp's view of seeing and estimating the worlds of other people. To-day I preserve the same view. I have gone on and on, I have pushed on and on, I have been impelled to go on and on, I have dreamed and gone on and on. All sober self-examinations and calculations, all deductions, all impulses, all fears, have as their sum made me to go forth and wander : seek isolation, refuse com-

panionship, deny myself security. I have feared most a growing sense of security ; I have made myself one with my kind. I have proved, as I have said always, there is but one man and but one world for man, so I am never out of place.

My first real thrill in the North was at sight of Ganjusan. This is a glorious snow-capped cone ; on its south and east side perfect as Fujisan, and towering to a great height, it showed above a world of woods and vales and innumerable pools and streaks of water, revealing a rare and comforting picture. Here I must say that water and high hills or mountains are always in sight ; it is impossible to look at anything or anywhere and not have water in the scene. The Japanese are amphibious as fish. They wouldn't make a road—not a railroad even—out of sight of water. I had been led to infer that the Far North was composed of poor and uninteresting land. I did not find it so. Instead, I found rich land everywhere. What is more, I saw proof of it in a numerous and brave peasantry. No big towns, that is true ; but I want no more of these. I saw too much water on the land, and too much faith in water.

Nearly all this region is of very old decomposed peat, and so destitute of body that it will not support

profitable crops except those of a sub-aquatic nature ; but above the river and lake beds, the drain hollows, and the silt and peat plains, there is good soil waiting to give great store. The rains are so frequent and the air so moist that all vegetation stays to make mould, hence there is a nine to twenty-four inch cap of fibrous peaty soil over the upper crust of mineral matter. In this peat and sour earth no true grasses thrive—only stunted oaks, pines, and a great variety of profitless scrub and weeds. Large plantings of larch have been made, and though this does well, there is room for other trees, especially the maritime pine for resin and turpentine. The most important work to be done in a country of this nature consists in subsoiling and surface draining, to incorporate mineral matter with the sour surface soil, and provide a safe medium for true grasses. Lime and basic slag are necessary to vast areas.

The country showed nothing more impressive than the low and lake-like plains of paddy fields, and their tiny, doll-like women slaving in them. Little burying-grounds, set close with upright stones, peeped between a mulberry tree or two on mounds amid the mire. Water, raised by hand and tread-wheels, lifts slush from holes and pours it over the rice plats. All Asia employs this method. The manure—half-rotted rice

straw—was all carried in bundles on women's backs, and scattered and spread by their hands; they did the same, too, with big clods of earth. The workers are wonderfully deft in using hand implements of a most primitive character.

I never before covered so much ground to note so little change in the dress and general surroundings of a peasant people. In fact, one notes no change at all, excepting in the size and substance of the houses. As one journeys north thatch becomes the prevailing roofing: this is so thick and dominating, one sees roofs only, for the walls are low, dark, windowless, and there are but tiny doors. Where villages or individual houses are exposed, their roofs are covered with heavy stones, indicating the frequency and violence of the winds. Several miles of railway by the sea were walled and covered with timber, as protection against snow-drift—eloquent testimony of the winter climate. The azalea and wild cherry glorified all the hills, and trees of great beauty and variety were always in sight.

Neither land nor people showed clean. Mire, mire, and the dependence on mire, left nothing free from it or to be admired alone. Black Defiance one might term this region, for blacker and more sodden soil is not to be found. The same grim, gaunt ugliness is apparent

in our Black Country and in the busiest mining districts. All efforts appear temporary—another feature of mining regions. No fine house in country, village, or town; no tower or monument, no hint of vanity—and it takes a lot to make a splendid land or a land splendid. Nothing but mire and toil, planting of seed, taking of toll, planting of trees, felling of trees, bearing of trees, and the little trains to come along and bear the trees away. So it seemed. Everything got to the railway stations and was carried off, leaving the peasant with a wondering look, and looking into his open hands to wonder a moment and then fall to work again.

Of course these conditions are not confined to Northern Japan; but here one noticed them to the full, because there was no life to the full for one moment. I believe in hand labour; I believe in the man on the land; also I believe in his having a share of what he earns, a better fare, a better time, a larger sense of joy, and a bit of exhilarating leisure. I know that in many cases the ignorant are best off; they escape so much. Many times I thought, how like our own; how unnecessary to travel so far to see people, lands, employments, which might be matched in a thousand parts of Europe. No, there is but one class of peasant: he is the same in labour, mind, and heart

wherever he is to be found ; and it will soon be impossible for any one to contend that I have not seen enough or reasoned enough on the peasant to be familiar with his lot. Favoured to the full, he can but dwell where love is not a fearful thing, and passion breeds no pain.

The Japanese at home are hard to estimate, so full of strange contrasts, so mystifying, where neither new nor disturbing. In fact, they do not impress one as people, though they are human and sound enough in many ways. One is constantly impressed by the amount of hand labour. Consider that the main islands of Japan are over one thousand miles long by two hundred miles wide, and that all the cultivated lands are worked by hand tools, and human hands as tools. Something may be said in support of a continuance of this system, a good deal may be urged against it. A nation employed, a nation sane, a nation safe—that is all we should consider.

But what a lot of tiny, semi-dwarf people ! All seemed to be begotten by mischance. Japan must have a better fare. The race is degenerating, and cannot be improved on such fare. Education will not help the country people—only make them dissatisfied, less skilful, and reduce their numbers. In Japan there will always

be poverty and wealth in different regions, and in the North the lot of the people will not soon improve. A lot of land might be canalized and graded, so that steam, electric, and horse implements could be put to work ; then agriculture would become a business of exploitation, enterprise would come in, and the peasant would go out. Old Japan needs to beware of modern or scientific agriculture.

With these peasants I might have sat down or bent down, and laboured to live and end the same as they. I liked this feeling ; I liked to feel that there was not a field in all the land that was not mine. I did not care if it were hedging or ditching, sowing of grain, hoeing of grain, making the sheaf, or bearing it to the mart or mill. Were they planting or trimming or felling of trees, that were my task surely. In the woods I feel more like a tree than a man, and in truth I would rather be a tree. A forest tree confined to shade and scents of the fallen leaves, soil about my feet, the sun and the clear air round my head, then I must live and grow uprightly. I mused on what I saw, and I have written of what I saw and how I mused thereon.

Just before dusk the sea broke upon us ; there was a strange sense of the Far North, of hairy and befurred men, of oil and blubber, rude little craft and crafty

little huts, instinct with desire to hide themselves away from roaring winds and clouds of snow. This was Asamushi, on the Strait of Aomori, facing the shore of the most northerly island of Yezo. This sea hath no motion, nor any sound—a water that listens for lovers, as Swinburne writes. Often there is more in mute things than in those which speak; the dead are the inspiring; things gone are nearest, of most account. What we long for is truer far than any thing or person we may touch and know. All gladness is in silence and in stillness born. What we did and dared to think we would do—our dreams, and dreams of dreams: they have provided the big sensations, the fortunate prizes of our lives.

At Asamushi Time was mine. No sound or threat of sound. I was beyond the reach of man and his concerns. To be unwanted is to be at the maximum of self for self. I felt like a bride who, content, nursed desire for an appointed season, then threw restraint to the winds. To give up is to take up the best of self.

For hours I climbed the wooded hills, browsed among the wet weeds and the mud borders of the paddy fields. Then I took to the silent, black village again, and looked for life. That was my want—a sign of life. I could not accept the dirt-begrimed little women,



pulling at timber and manure packs and charcoal and fishing boats ; I could not accept the men either. They were not men any more than the others were women. I had a temporary feeling that I was wasting time, that it would pay to move on ; but I soon corrected myself. I had come to see the Far North : what its people were and lived by ; not to wish for anything different, or to run away from anything. That is where the world in general loses so much. It runs away from every suspicion of drabness or what it cannot enjoy readily. That is why I am not a gay traveller ; that is why travelling is hard and painful work to me. I stay to see the glamour wear off ; I take no man's word ; I give the word as I find the sum of the land and its people.

I did not observe a marked difference in the peasant of the Far North from the peasant of the Central Provinces. In stature, in manner, and in employment he seems, and she seems, to be much the same. The men put on more clothing because of the intense cold, and the women for the same reason : which is which and who is who is discernible only after close inspection. Quilted blue cotton stuff provides a long shirt or smock tied in at the waist, and cotton trousers padded and poulticed are worn equally long or short by both sexes. Gaiters of brown rush and yellow straw, straw coats,

and occasionally a green-hide, furred, or hairy animal skin, forms a coat or protection for the back of the wearer ; handkerchiefs and fur hats cover the heads. There is no thought of appearance ; there is not a so-called savage on the face of the earth wearing ruder garments than some of the peasant people of Northern Japan. I do not state this unkindly, but as a fact. Every country in the world has its primitive section, its debasing employments. I did not see enough native wealth in the Far North of Japan to lead to any race improvements within a measurable time. Military strategists won't improve the peasants ; they are more likely to destroy them or drive them out.

The sea came in and went out, it rose and it fell silently, and the shore remained the same. I saw a wet line, and no more. Little frivolous waves flirted with the pebbles, and the pebbles jeered and lilted in reply. There were contradictions here. A soft, broad-lapped land, an idle sea, a silent folk, a convincing threat and expression of poverty. I saw no happy child, nor any clean one. I saw no soul capable of smiling, or that understanding which we Europeans regard as the base of our existence. So you may see I was not idle nor wasting time. I was seeing ; and though I saw little, and could feel little out of what I saw, it was the all of

a community, though it were but a village. I was convinced that there were no ancient crones, no old men or old maids in Northern Japan. I did not see an individual old in appearance or infirm, and I looked industriously.

With so little to do in the house, most of the girls are available for outdoor employment ; and beginning, they find no chance or desire to leave off. They work without making any sound or sign of labour. That is one of their most attractive qualities ; they are so quiet. Indeed, I would call them the Quiet People. Only when they are angry and afraid of themselves do they raise their voices, and then one hears them from a distance, and keeps to it. I tried to distinguish between what might be homage and what respect, but I failed to inform myself. At Asamushi, the mistress and her three maids did me reverence all, but in varying degree ; for it seemed that the maids had no such privileges as their mistress, and their bows and obeisance, their glances, smiles, and shufflings, hither and away, were unlike as might be.

For instance, on my arrival the hostess came into my room, undressed me, slipped on a kimona, tied a band round my waist, and seemed to hug me as she tied and delayed the tying. Then she took me by the hand, as if I were a feckless child or a strange sort of

prize, pushed back a portion of a wall, and revealed a winding stair and cavernous depth, whence came a strong earth odour. The place held thermal springs, and this house was built over one of these. The hostess descended the stairs before me, holding my ankle, directing my foot, stroking my white skin, and cawing her pleasure. Arrived at a landing, another wall section was thrown back, and I saw a sort of well, with blue-gray walls, and in the centre of the floor a pool, from which curled up a wraith of greenish-blue and white steam. The effect was bewitching, a fine example of the magic and artistry of the East. The little dame pointed to my bath, bowed, and left me.

Later, she waited on me at each meal, usually crouching and bowing, and never leaving the room till she saw that something more to eat or drink was ready in the kitchen. The maids would open the door and look in, for no reason that I could discover; but enter they would not when their mistress was with me. They were not shy nor forward, nor more than a little bit curious. A few actions of mine must have appeared odd to them, and of these they talked together. It was only when they brought anything to my door and the hostess was with me that they showed such extreme courtesy, bowing and bowing, and pushing my bowl or platter into

the room with their eyes averted, as if the sight of or shrine of this god was a blinding spectacle. The big manservant was as obeisant as the womenkind. He touched the floor literally with the crown of his head every time he came to my room.

This was so like a scene out of *Vathek*, *Rasselas*, or some other Arabian romance, that I never felt I was so far East as I knew I must be. Indeed, it was these minor traits of human life, these manners and customs, which made the tie and the interest. Japan was not new ground. It was the oldest ground, the place where old romance was a living thing. The armour and the dungeon had gone, the captive prince and the white maiden were nowhere to be seen. The steed was not dappled nor dark ; there was no boundless plain over which Mazeppa might fly. Yonder lay island and island, snow peak and calm seas ; the sun shone and the winds blew, violent and more violent were the threats of storm by land and by water ; and the little brown men, and the tinier blue rag dolls of women, bent and bowed to their toil, that they might hear less or fear less from the elements : but the Stranger cometh, and the door of old romance and ancient life is flung wide. The Little People do remember ; they received so slowly and in such a time as to retain acts of obedience towards

man, such as were exacted when men—some men—were worshipped as gods. So, for myself, I was glad I saw and felt this homage. Here was no possibility of two sets of manners ; all were to the manner born—to that manner they must die.

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The rascal who kept the house charged me four shillings more than he had the right to, but may I forget that and think of my gains at Asamushi. Whilst I was there I liked it all, and when I had gone I liked it, if anything, more. What a room it was ! And what a bath that was ! What a hostess she was, and how proudly she sat and sewed a hole in a coat for me ! The Japanese women won't wash clothes, they can't cook ; but, lord love 'em ! they can use a needle. I felt proud to wear the trousers one had darned at the knee, and the coat seemed more comfortable from having been sewn and handled by my tiny hostess. She had a singing kettle holding two gallons or so of water, and worth a ton or two of money, I should say, from all the flowers and tracery and inviting little scenes that covered its entire exterior. Also there were some rare bits of native wood used in the house decorations, which pleased me mightily ; but if one sits down to write of Japanese houses and their gods, one will write of nothing else.

## CHAPTER V.

OF RICE, A RICKSHAW, AND RIOTOUS LIVING.

I WENT off feeling I was leaving friends, and I needed them, for soon it rained snow and sleet, and the dirty tail of winter smirched me at every turn of the road. Hundreds of peasants crowded at Aomori, and I was kept warm moving amongst them and observing their extraordinary variety of garb and their very primitive faces. They wore undressed fur mats, hats, and coats, with no attempt at finish or fit. All were booked for the same region as I—to do the spring work on the land. For once I did not want to be third class. Japanese tobacco is mild, and does not pollute the smoker ; but this crowd carried round some rare odours, of which one whiff was enough ; but there were many, chiefly from rancid fat and blood, and the wild stench of the undressed skins which formed the warm garments of the crowd. We soon got into very prosperous country, the low levels soaked with water and snow on the banks by the railway, and it seemed that whatever

happened in a day or a thousand years, there would always be rain and more rain.

Rich, elevated plains and vales lay between the mountains and hills, but only the flat and the low land was put to use. The Japanese display no capacity for handling agricultural areas apart from the paddy field, which is given up to rice, barley, hemp, and a little wheat. Paddy is an Indian word for rice in an undressed condition, but it is now applied to any area served by water to support short-lived crops. The Japanese paddy fields are formed of decomposed peat and the drift accumulations from old river systems and storm courses. Here and there shelving land may be excavated, terraced, and smoothed out to receive the necessary flooding.

Rice is an aquatic plant, and will not grow to yield profitable grain apart from a deep, fertile slush, which must be covered with water right up to the time of the harvesting of the crop. In spring the bare land is flooded, that it may be loosened and enriched with manure. In Japan the bulk of the soil dressing consists of weeds and rubbish collected from uncultivated areas. When the manure, or dressing, has been trodden into the slush by the feet of men and women, or forced under by means of a broad, comb-like implement pulled



by a single bullock or horse, the land is again flooded to secure a perfectly smooth and evenly-saturated body of material, and to free all the fertilizing elements.

If the land is free of bad weeds, the rice may be sown broadcast, and induced to germinate under two or three inches of water. But it is a more common and better method to sow the rice in seed plots and transplant in rows, as this facilitates weeding and moulding up of the crop—an advantage always, as the rice plant does best when preserving a good number of aerial roots. With slight variations, necessitated by soil and other local conditions, the preparation of rice land and the handling of the crop does not vary in Western Europe—Portugal and Spain—from Central and Eastern Asia. The rice terraces to be seen in parts of Ceylon are, in my judgment, the most perfect examples of industry adding to native beauty of anything to be seen in the world.

The Japanese are truthful and humorous in their terming their planting of rice “The Peasant’s Dance.” It is that truly, but never a clean or cheerful performance.

In the North-west were wide, rich valleys, carrying generous soil, and large, clean rivers. Peasant huts and small villages were to be seen everywhere, and there was enough native material in sight to develop and

supply a sound and comfortable population. Instead, every one and everything showed miserably lean and mean. The land was not understood : that was the cause of the poverty. Instead of one crop of rice annually, this land could yield an average of two or three, costing less and yielding more than the best crop of rice. In spite of all the labour, all the downright honesty of aim, and the splendid content of the people, they were not using half the flat land.

One might say their work represented hand-sewing against using a machine ; in fact, it was using a small pair of human hands against a team of horses or an engine. But most of all was the system of culture at fault. This land is not the sort for paddy fields ; in one sense it is, in another it is not. There can be no new Japan, no regeneration of the people, which shall mean absolute physical betterment of the people, till the hand labour and the paddy-field system are thrust aside or limited to small and exceptional areas, which may not be deemed worthy of the attention of the Government and its teachers.

For hours on hours we passed through good country, though it showed none but very poor people. Quite the best-informed class of Japanese wished to convince me that they needed to grow more, not less, rice. I

replied, "No—unless you are prepared to perpetuate the degenerating customs of Old Japan. Don't think it can be done by schools and pedagogues wearing double glasses. Get agricultural engineers to put the land in order ; establish demonstration grounds ; assist small and large landholders to travel and study abroad, and apply their knowledge to their own lands. Agriculture can be learnt in the field, and there only. Agricultural schools are job shops and little more. I've worked in them. Don't think school-trained farmers will farm ; they won't. They'll go into Parliament or County Councils, if they can, and talk about farming."

The Japanese peasant needs to have his land put in order to accommodate more varied and better crops. He may grow fodder for animals, then he can keep animals to work and improve his land and his lot. Americans, Australians, New Zealanders, Britishers, Danes—these are the people knowing most of the things Japan requires to know and put into practice in her agriculture. Except that there are no hedges, no signs of trimness and solid wealth, one may travel for days and days in Northern Japan and see country almost exactly like that of the southern half of England, though as a whole it bears a striking resemblance to Ireland, only much more hilly. In fact, it is mountainous, and

it is impossible to get out of sight of mountains and splendid hills. The heavy snowfall in the North will enable water power to be used both directly and by electricity for a variety of purposes.

One can do no less than admire the men and women on the land. Praise makes but a poor epitaph ; but for those who are to come after may a little more be done. Where there is no Sunday, no market day, and burying makes a dull funeral, I see no reason or delight in living. I saw no peasant man or woman at play, and I believe in play far more than I believe in work. I work only to get health and the means to enjoy my play. I saw no man sitting at his door enjoying his prospect, or looking as if he had any prospect. If I saw anything plainly, it was the purblindness of those who were slaving and trying to live by the land. The Japanese peasant is the simplest child. He has a certain cunning and astuteness, as have all primitive people ; but until trained to think, and shown a better way, he will win no splendid harvests from his land.

Japan must not be afraid. Neither Asia, Europe, nor America wants to overrule her. Whatever comes into Japan must soon be Japanese ; she cannot expect more foreign capital without more foreign men. If I were twenty years younger, and possessed of the sum of

agricultural knowledge which is mine to-day, I would throw in my lot with Japan, and in twenty years see her wring from twenty to thirty millions sterling annually over and above what she wrings from the soil to-day. This is no high-falutin'. The land is there, the water is there, and an abundant population to the labour born. The vast bulk of the country is in a state of Nature, so are the people, and it is not attractive and complete Nature either. Northern Japan is cold for its geographical position, but it has a milder climate than the south of England ; and the only excuse for its backwardness is the old one of Don't Know.

Of course this is not condemnation. I have nothing but praise and sympathy for the Little People. With the means at their disposal within the last fifty years they have worked wonders ; they can see and think and work, take a kick and come again. If I see any diversion of effort it is in the way of pursuing a foreign rather than a domestic policy. I must not pretend to know everything, or I shall be set down as knowing nothing ; but it seems to me that Japan can do without the strain of a big army. If she can keep her Navy strong enough to protect her shores, she will be better off in employing her men in developing her land. The extent, variety, and numberless uses to which this

may be put, make it the sole and abiding stock-in-trade of the Japan of the future.

A little while ago I wrote that it was my habit to stay in places till the glamour wore off, and I saw the stern and irksome side of things ; but it is well with me if I can count my pleasurable life down to so many yesterdays, to remember so clearly that I may lift into my presence all that was best in the past.

After night fell upon the road I was carried for three or four hours through driving rain and pitch darkness, then I arrived at Akita, a small town on the north-west coast. A hotel had been named for me, and, taking a rickshaw, I was whisked off, not knowing if the lodging were across the road or a mile away. It proved to be more than a mile, and if I could describe what I felt and thought it would be a very comical mile. Not that I was comfortable—and let me say I have noticed that the discomfoting, the fearful, and the humorous often go together.

Outside my pockets, which were bulky and bulging with odds and ends, I had three bags and a rug which must be kept dry, a stick, and an umbrella—two good loads, including myself, for two strong rickshaws and men. But hurried by the rain, and worried for want of pence, a rickshaw man bundled me in, tilted the

shafts up, and told the porter to load my luggage on me. He did ! Also a wet blanket and two wet tarpaulins. Everything was muddy and mixed ; so were my feelings. I wanted to swear and to command, to laugh and to get out and generally damn things and people Japanese ; but thinking the discomfort might be momentary only, I said, " Away you go "—and away he went. Lord ! how it rained, and a hole in the hood of the rig shot the water first down my neck, then down my chest. I said, " Hurry up ! " and the driver stopped to argue. I said, " Hurry up ! " and something more, but it did not and it does not matter.

Rain is water merely, and as it's that always in Japan, there was nothing to heed or worry about. We turned into a rather well-lit street, and took it for a long way ; then we turned into a lane that was dark and fearful, and into one, two, three others, if anything darker and more fearful. I began to feel the least bit nervous. Was I taken for a pay officer of the army, come in the night with sacks of paper money, and was I sniffed and scented and on the way to some robbers' lair ?

I wanted to say, " How much farther is it ? " but I couldn't say it. I couldn't say a word ; I couldn't spit even, for the hood of the rig was in my way. The

rickshaw man padded on ; he had his spit and gurgle and chest grunt now and then, as the road or his strength varied ; but I had no employment but to hang on to all my belongings, keep the water to itself, and wait for light. It came at last—as nice a light as one could wish for ; we rolled into a yard, and I rolled out. Somehow the materials got divided, and this animate part stood up and then bowed down before a comely and clean-looking young man, who had beside him a row of five equally comely and clean-looking young maids.

I had arrived at the Ishibashi Hotel, and a mighty good one it proved. This was my first experience of a large Japanese Yadoya-inn ; kwan is an inferior title corresponding with tavern. In the night it was all passages and luminous paper walls, rooms and signs of rooms beyond counting ; also there were beautiful furnishings, rare prints on the walls, and a clean odour about ; in fact, there was something far better—there was no odour at all. I was taken to what seemed to be the remotest back premises, yet found myself in a wonderful room. It was wonderful in what it held and what it lacked. First of all, it held something invisible yet surely there, which made me at home, secure, in a moment. I have said I do not like security ; but when night comes, when I am wet and cold, then I want to feel safe.



I was preceded by two or three of the maids, and I picked one to serve me the moment I saw her amongst the others—they all bowing and tittering and trying to help me, who wanted no help at all. The elegancies of the room I may never define or describe : I think it may be that one is impressed by the sense of perfect form, exquisite design, restraint of colour, and the finished workmanship of everything. There are no bare spaces, nor any that are bizarre. I remember that there was a delicate little tea-set and appurtenances ; a large chibashi (brazier) with enough glowing coals to make the room warm ; a most familiar little iron kettle with a dull brass lid sat singing, as if thankful that I had come at last ; a lacquer bowl held three quaint but fascinating forms of sweets—cubes of rice jelly of different flavours and colours ; and there was a complete set of smoking requisites.

A maid gave me tea, the others bowing their hopes that it would be an honourable effort to honourably dispose of the honourable portion. I took it all, I took everything in sight ; then the maids took themselves off. Later I was honourably invited to honourably dispose of the honourable dirt of the honourable journey. I did, and up came the Far Eastern question of towel or no towel. I was urged to wash, but I said in un-

mistakable Japanese, "Let me see the towel first." "Ah! the towel," said the sharpest of the three maids in equally good and equally understandable Japanese, "the towel—the Stranger uses a towel!"

So a fat old man was called; he lay buried in a box beside the lavatory. When he got out of his box he went to another, and drew forth a small, dirty, wet rag. Very kindly, very gently, very firmly I said, "No. A towel, just a towel." And to prove one slight difference, I produced my handkerchief and put a bit of the wet rag and a bit of the dry handkerchief against the face of my favourite little maid. She liked the attention and the humour; she appeared to bully the silly old man, and signing me to wait, she went for a towel.

In the course of time it came, dry, clean, diaphanous, small. It might dry my face and neck, but not my hair; so I made a wash with limitations, but it confirmed me that I was indeed at home. The maids arranged the bed, saw me into it, screened me off, and said, "Sayonara," which means, "Good-night—Good-bye—Sweet dreams," and I was soon asleep.

## CHAPTER VI.

### JAPANESE INSTINCT IN ART.

ART is not all. If it were, I could not say enough of Japan. The Japanese is in some ways the oldest human form remaining for our study. He is the most discerning and the most primitively cautious man in the world ; he is more informing than lower physical types, because he is more accessible. We cannot get much from an Australian aborigine, because he never was much, nor had he any native power of communicating the little he knew. He neither felt, reasoned, nor desired to reason. We can go to nothing more remote than the oldest orders of civilized man, and of these the Japanese is most informing. He is the only man preserving animal instincts who can communicate with man.

As I estimate the Japanese as a race, they are more primitive and more advanced than we. They can see, think, and feel in all ways—backwards, forwards, hereabouts, out of the depths, into the depths. They know

of things outside themselves, within themselves, which we do not ; they are still impelled by true instinct rather than by communal reason ; they are linked and in league with all we know or desire of the earth earthy, and they remain the best study for us on the earth to-day. And why ? Because their Art, their Employments, their Life do not mean for them what we think they do.

Our views of Art are not as their views, any more than our ways are as their ways. We cannot think back to obtain any addition to life unless we can feel back. Sometimes in rare, sub-conscious moments I am at the beginning of animate things ; not a Mortal but an Atom, that feels and is conscious of feeling—no more. The Japanese do not speak of or think of their work as great Art, but perfect Nature. This is no more than Shakespeare's the Art itself is Nature, but in the Japanese scheme of life Art is for enlightenment rather than for enjoyment.

The strongest feature, the distinctiveness of Japanese life, may be voiced in the word intimacy, but this does not explain all ; it goes beyond intimacy with each other and the things they touch and look upon. They discern so far, they seem to have no voids in their world—no mysteries, nor any unsatisfied desires ; they dis-

play only such fears as are common to all animals. There must be some rare, good, yet unexplained reason for this, and if it is true, Japan's contribution to the sum of human life and human story must be of rare value to us. One may contend that intuition yields more than investigation. The native Japanese needs no microscope, test-tube, nor any crucible; his mind and his mind's eye penetrates measures and appraises all things; it is a great good gift of insight that he has, and we may well consider its source. I believe he owes much to the fact that he has been long at ease. His isolation has saved him to himself.

The missionaries of Art, Trade, and Religion have never overrun Japan so far and so long as to alter its store and the native man's way of estimating that store. One may say that in Japan all things become Japanese; things native breed true, and things acquired are soon overwhelmed by dominating native forces. A powerful will is visible in all that belongs to Japan. Every human being, every animal—and there are not many of these—is wilful in a way peculiar to the land. It is a swift, strong, and sure will, but quiet and gifted with the advantage of the sense of ample time. Now Art and all good things have sprung out of leisure, and it has been the leisure of the mind rather than of the body.

A capacity for far-seeing and an idler's love of pleasant places have led a few men in some lands, and most men in a few lands, to the conviction that they could do nothing better than enjoy the most beautiful and most companionable things. A Japanese is wedded by faith to the most perfect things ; his eye is true, his land is sure, he has time and ample means. At one time I complained that the Japanese had done nothing great, now I see more in their national habit of proving themselves artists all ; and theirs is the highest and the only sane and worthy Art—the Art of using Time well, and thereby living well.

We Europeans may never descend to the Japanese state of mind and feeling ; I confess it might be a descent, but not a disaster. A sane man does not mind what he knows, once sure that he knows. A Japanese once he learns of us is dissatisfied with himself, and more or less ashamed of his own country ; but it were better for the world of humanity if it tended towards the Eastern rather than the Western conception of life. The broad distinction is—Content *versus* Discontent. The European wants to own things, the Japanese wants to understand things. It is true and interesting that the Japanese will does not preserve its force and character once it comes under European influences. In fact, the

whole man changes ; he becomes fluid, vacant, and ready to absorb influences of every colour and degree of value.

Japanese Art, the Japanese system of life, is most elusive. The mental craft and handicraft, so pronounced throughout Japan, fades out once a man leaves his native land. This is a reassertion of the primitive elements and the capacity for adaptation. The more one knows of the instincts of wild animals the better one is equipped to estimate the Japanese. When a wild animal is driven to the necessity of securing a new lair it displays fears and emotions unlike those employed amid familiar surroundings. The Japanese shows wild, and is concerned in the same degree. Under dual influences no animal can remain wholly tame or wholly wild. I say this only to make clear that to know a wild animal one must study it in its state of wildness, and to know the Japanese one must see them uncontaminated by the peoples, prejudices, and material things of other nations. Also, this means that many things good to perfection in Japan mean little and serve less once they are detached from their source.

This profound sense of intimacy is not the equal endowment of all the stay-at-home Japanese ; but it is frequent, and in the aggregate abundant enough to shed

a rare light upon the most primal instincts and employments of civilized man. One may contend that the Japanese are the least sophisticated of the civilized orders of men. They have fallen back upon themselves where others have fallen back upon others, and repeated the process to no end. Nothing has left Japan to make her less than she was, nor anything come in to make her more than she was. She is the Shrine of Conservatism—the Enemy of Change. She has killed faiths by disregarding them ; she has preserved her early emotions by failing to perceive the need of any other or higher emotions. That is the general attitude, and, as I have said, it is still common enough for us to see, and with some trust desire.

And what is this elusive Something that is so eloquent and convincing in Japan, and yet not namable, estimable, available, acceptable for us ? I attribute all difference in values to varying powers of perception and reception. Europeans, as individuals, have fooled themselves into a state of complete ignorance by engaging in the study and pursuit of more than they might possibly understand or put to use. The Japanese has desired little, and only desired what he might understand to his own security. There was a time when our ancestors lived by the same studies and performances as the Japanese



peasants of to-day. Also, there was a time when our workmen were thorough, and knew a great deal of the nature and story of the materials they employed ; but I cannot be persuaded that any of them knew, as the Japanese know, of the material earth and its store.

The Japanese makes all things live, and he does this by proving that he is part of all things. To him nothing is so dead and disorganized that it may be ignored, nor is anything beyond his reach. He puts all things to use, yet leaves them as Nature formed them. This, if strange, is true. So, one is led on by him, and led to no end by him, for he is the end. That is well. One sees him occupied, winning in silence, winning always, the prizes of Time, and they are ever so simple, so natural, yet so rare. He makes you see their value—the value of all visible and definable things.

This, it seems to me, is the rare elusive Something the Japanese has to give us—the offering of a new way of seeking and searching, a new way of accepting of the things on which we may depend, a new method of appraisement, and a new zeal for labour. He works ; he works ; he works always. And when we consider that he has worked in millions on the same small areas and things for somewhere nigh two thousand years, then we do not doubt that the intimacy that he claims with

Nature, and his power of revealing instincts no longer serving European needs, are due to his intensive system of life, reliance on self, a power of seeing in and in, till home and heart are centred there.

He is the peasant proud—proud out of all he feels ; he is the offspring of love-labour, his reward the supporting sense of outward and near-by things ; he is the world's most natural man, very old but audible, and, as I see him, one whose way of life we should be at pains to understand.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE GARDENS OF AKITA.

ON my deciding to visit Akita a native said, "Don't." He didn't know the town or the neighbourhood; but he wished me to believe that he knew both, and above all he was convinced that I should not get to Akita without stealing some secret or substance of priceless value to Japan.

Akita has a regular cult of tree men and gardeners, and I wished to see and learn of both. The men and the owners of four gardens with their staffs proved so engrossing that I could make but few notes of their wonderful work. I own that I was haunted with the fear that we Europeans might never discern the forms and expressions of Nature so clearly as to place our gardening among the Fine Arts. All the time I was taking this garden work to pieces. To me it was like a house furnished: it had its architect, its builder, its furnisher, its caretaker; it called for skilled handicraftsmen to supply the furnishings—most of all, rare

eyes and hands to select and order them. Looked at in this way, one may deal with Japanese gardens. What stands out and places the Japanese head and shoulders above Europeans is not their power of reproducing natural landscapes on a reduced scale, but their subtle knowledge of all the elements and phenomena of scenes and of tree growth.

My first garden at Akita was vast and boundless. In truth it was about ninety by ninety feet, confined by house and other garden walls and thickets of living green. Very old in material and expression, this garden was but eight years formed and planted. Some of its large trees were over two hundred years old ; several were pines over forty feet high, others were old stumps and pollarded trees. All had been brought in with never a thought that they might die, though they were needed to reveal the struggle that is in all life, and to yield a rare sense of age and character. Look where one would, Nature offered a positive support, and the feeling of privacy was beyond calculation.

The thickest trunks of the pollarded trees were over twenty inches in diameter ; these were plum and wild apricot, and there were fantastic and storied stumps of elder, oak, and cherry. These trees had been prepared—some in open country, others in gardens—in root

and trunk and branch over a great many years. As stated earlier, they had been made prematurely old, rugged, shaggy, dwarf, fantastic, by much the same means as the quaint tree and bush forms of constantly cropped thickets and hedgerows.

A large lake dominated the foreground of this garden. Here the sunlight fell, and there was the sense of space and gaiety almost, aided by immense dark and golden carp in the water, and by stones, far extending shores, and outlets to inviting coasts or fields. Away from the water and the effects it produced, the trees were sombre, and the shadows within the trees so pronounced, that there was no hint of sun or sky overhead. The highest mounds were about fifteen feet above the mean level, and the water about three feet below, or, say, twenty feet in all. This was a strong, sober, invigorating piece of work.

In the same neighbourhood another garden, little larger than the first, was composed of an immense stretch of dry and wind-swept waste or weald. All it held was born of light—strong, dry, desiccating sunlight was the source of this picture. The actual skyline was overhead almost, for a series of houses, walls, and trees confined the space; yet a strong, hot light poured in from the far horizon of a boundless desert. Little

hummocks, drifts, and depressions provided all the charm of far-awayness to the most open space. In naturally correct positions, there were several woods and clumps of pine copses and banks of hawthorn trees, shrubs, and azaleas ; damp depressions with appropriate plants, and a large proportion of shaly and chalky floor space, with winding, irregular courses of stepping-stones. No weeds grew on the chalk or marl ; all the clothed portions of the stonework rose above this dry, churlish, uncongenial floor.

The space was in the form of a Y, the foot piece and the right fork shorter than the left. This garden was ten years old ; it would have been difficult to disprove it were not five hundred. Old stone, old timber, old trees, the old of everything had been introduced to provide true and storied effect.

This example of semi-desert gardening was dry and hot in expression ; in fact I walked about with my hat off, though the moment I turned to the other fork of the garden, I discovered it was cold. Here was water, heavier darker planting, some grass on the floor, shadows, mystery, confinement, and many forces not to be seen, but felt and looked for only. In its widest dimensions this garden was not one hundred and forty feet. It was vast, it was varied, and though one may not say

how, it was splendid—I return to the word—life-giving. It was no place for the mere plant grower or the novelty monger. It was a feast of Nature, sweet, complete.

What is so easily seen, and is almost impossible of explanation, is the value of bare space in evolving effect in this style of garden. I am convinced that this is good gardening: that it is not trivial, finicking, childish, or unsuitable to the European house or climate or human want. Not how it is done, but why it is done, that we should know. We can have it; the question arises, Do we need it? Is it as good as, better than our own? Often it is better; it is worse never; it is fit for rich, poor, and medium spenders; it is fit for towns and all confined spaces; and it takes one a long way further on the road to happiness, bred of insight, than do most European gardens.

In their gardening the Japanese leave nothing, yet everything, to the imagination. It is not like a bit of wild or sylvan coast: it is a stretch of wild or sylvan coast. Our choice of positions for, and our approaches to, water are our weakest points. I am anxious to make plain that the Japanese designs a setting, moulds a floor or foundation, which rises into, pervades, justifies, and finishes all his good landscape work. In a sense the Japanese garden lacks that dignity demanded by our

great houses and large domains. Japan never came to what we know as spacious days and stateliness. I saw the old-time gardens of several daimios, or feudal lords. These were all strongholds, the material chopped out and piled up with no more thought of creating beauty than a railway contractor has in making cuttings and forming embankments, or the men who made the earth-works about moats.

What the Japanese, and some Europeans, call the great gardens or parks of Japan have no special merit in ground plan or in choice and style of planting. As a general statement, one may say that the best Japanese garden instinct is town bred ; the towns are not, and never were, large. Also there is a great deal of garden work, so-called, in Japan, which has no character or quality whatsoever. In my estimation, the best work is the modern. The insight, the art, and the skill have grown ; the extreme privacy and narrowness of Japanese life in olden times made it difficult to combine so many good things as are available to-day. At the same time, Japanese gardening is intensely conservative ; in no good example is there much variety in plants, and there is always a notable absence of flowers.

I may never describe the extraordinary charm and the compelling effects of another of the gardens at Akita.



The space was about seventy by one hundred and fifty feet ; the house stood to one corner of the length, and the principal view was from the house across the garden space diagonally. The larger part of the area was perfectly level, and covered with purple, brown, and bronze-gold moss or sedge, varying from one to four inches high ; an irregular belt of trees and shrubs formed an extensive woodland around this old lake or river-bed, or once-flooded hollow, for everything pointed to such cause and effect ; very dark, almost black, water-worn stones lay about, appearing to sulk at the absence of water and the way they had been left high and dry. A few tiny plants ventured to grow near, and made a kindly effort to console the scowling and lonely monsters of the river or lake, long dried and gone.

Five of us sat staring, wondering, debating which and what things yielded such overwhelming and charming effects. I plumped for the bare floor space ; but was it bare ? Was ever a weed less of a weed, or little bare patches more full of beauty ? I remember one thing—we were all lost. We were far, far away. The feeling was like that we have when out on the rocks or a salt marsh : we fear the waves will cut us off and overtake us before we may regain the higher land. I saw this floor to fear it, to love it, to be envious of it.

I wanted it. I looked for salt and sourness ; I knew sourness must be there by the nature of the mosses and lichens and algæ making this wonderful floor. Here it was burned a rich purple, there it was more vigorous, had grown over more time, and was a hot seal-brown, then gold, changing by the most gradual shades, and no spot furnished or bare but was exactly as Nature disposes of such a piece of land. Here was seen the art of letting things alone : the perfection of restraint.

The trees around played their part, though one could not individualize them. The floor of dark purple and gold moss, sedges, and sour grass, the trees all dark, the stones all dark, a few light and purple splashes of maple, and the eye of the sky—these simple things made the rare scene. A copper-coloured azalea and one of white afforded all the colour visible among the belt of shrubs, the woodland clumps of pine. Each item was in its place to the last inch ; there was not a loose leaf about, nor the trace of a spade, rake, or broom. The landscape was the greatest I had ever seen in so small a compass, and on leaving I was told that its maker was a peasant under forty, who had never worn a boot or received a moment's instruction in gardening in his life.

I carry with me a picture—a landscape, man-made, yet passing the wit of a European man.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### NIKKO : THE SHRINE OF THE SACRED TREES.

AT Akita a rare sense of remoteness kept one glad. The toiling, straining, fearing multitude of Europe were replaced by men who, silent and without sign, had come to see and share the sum of sums. But for my pocket diary and the face of the world, I had no knowledge of time or season. It was May, and the earth showed it to be spring. The cherries, azaleas, and slender-stemmed wild apples were in full bloom.

One morning Nyo San roused me at five, made tea, and served my breakfast. In other ways she was very kind and circumspect. At six-thirty I was off; the morning an ancient gray, nothing young nor fresh nor quickening in sight; the valleys and their crowds of peasants putting in the spring crops kept me to reasonable employment, and I wrote with a desire to improve their lot. Although Nikko proved a rare place, I arrived to experience a disturbing sense of loss. For days I had been alone with my peasants and gardens—alone

with myself. Nature and primitive human nature had been ample for my desires, as I enjoyed the rare blessings of privacy ; but I had to go on, and the next halt was at Nikko.

What a place for pilgrims ! or it used to be. True, they came in my day ; but how different, how worse than different, how empty, heartless, tired, and soulless they all seemed. Nikko is lovely, but I could not bow to its temples and shrines.

They were neither. I saw rare beauty in the situation, and rare use made of the red lacquer and the stone lantern ; but the human scheme was so old, so tricky, so destitute of soul for soul, that I had not a suspicion of reverence or any thought that it was a duty to kneel and be glad. Always ready to kneel, to weep even, I could regard this as no more than a circus arena—a natural theatre, a place of merry-making, under the protection of the Happy Gods of the mountains.

As I don't like the ugly, I will not dwell on things I thought ugly at Nikko. Instead, I will write only of its charms, its grandeur, its inspiring airs ; and, please the gods ! these lines may show how far I was inspired there. What queer folk have money ! Often I have laughed at the earning faculty, the saving faculty, and the class who come in for windfalls. Oh that the winds

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from heaven had blown instead ; oh that brains were as common as cash ! The hotel was crowded with travellers, and I heard talk of everything except the good things of this world. A good time was secured or missed ; they made a good bargain or a doubtful one ; they were bargain hunters to the last of them, and blushed not as they described the diddling they had done all along the road.

I wrote the foregoing testy words as I moved about with a landscape gardener. He wanted to bleed me, and I to bleed him. The only difference, I had no secrets or desire to hide my light where he was astute and thick-skinned as an armadillo.

As soon as he discovered I wanted information, he had none to give. I liked better " the richest man in Nikko." How many millions of any country's cash that might represent I had no idea ; but he must have been " pretty safe," as people say, for Nikko numbers several thousand inhabitants, has a royal residence, some large hotel proprietors, big shops, and a good many folk who live privately. I had some proof that the richest man in Nikko had free capital, as he was employing some thirty men and women in entirely unproductive work—if making a garden may be counted unproductive.

I met the rich man after driving a desperately hard

bargain with his brother and niece, proprietors of a curiosity shop.

When I can't deviate from the straight course of travel over land or over paper, I will go no more a-roving and I will write no more of roving, so here I digress and describe how I came to meet the richest man in Nikko. At the curiosity shop I picked out what I wanted, put my own value on the articles, and asked, "How much?" "Twenty-seven yen." "Too much; I'll give you fifteen yen, and not a sen more." The very sweet-faced little woman suffered a temporary loss of beauty and of balance. Never mind. I stood upright enough, and she could take fifteen yen or nothing. After a lot of sighs and most fascinating blandishments—to which I nearly fell a victim—she agreed to take the fifteen yen, when in came her father, and she promptly withdrew her consent. Very well, let's talk about Nikko. Oh no, there was no money in talking about Nikko.

The father was a keen lover of the books he sold, and honestly, I believe, he placed a far higher and better value upon rare old things than the money profit they brought him.

Very carefully, lovingly, he turned over the pages. They were books illustrated by Toyokuni and Katsu-

shi-ka, and prints by Otamaru and Hiroshige. Every now and then he looked at me from above his spectacles. He could speak English enough to make his way with me ; but with his daughter on the one side and me on the other, he was eloquent in both tongues, and for once I gained the meaning of every word. He ejaculated, he smiled, as he renewed his acquaintance with the pages. Book-lovers can estimate the worth of a smile born of the rare feelings which come on making the acquaintance of some page or picture long since lost sight of or forgotten. So the elderly and grave man was glad and made easy. I had helped him back a stage or two. Like myself, he would rather be dallying than going forward. I made no effort to grow into his heart, but I saw that he regarded me not unkindly. When he had thumbed and folded, lifted, caressed, and respread the things, and his daughter had bewailed her indiscretion and the hardness of the stranger, the father turned to us, as if about to bless us both ; and this is what he said : “ My daughter, this is the sort of man for you to meet ; he loves good things, and he is no fool in business.”

At this the daughter's face came to itself again. There is colour in the cheeks of all mountain-bred girls, and the girls of Nikko have the pinkest cheeks in all

Japan. Nikko San smiled herself into a beauty again, and the father said, with some forced courage, as I thought, "Gentleman, I make you a present of these things." I might have been humiliated, but was not. Now and then one must make a bargain, and as, I'll own, I'd been rigged and diddled more than once in a week, I was resolved to pay my price once in a way. Nikko San inquired my business. I said I had none, beyond making it my business to remain alive. Then would I, since her father had lost money, would I recommend my friends to the house of Sasamoto? Of course. So here is a long and strange and far-sent advertisement. No one may send to Nikko; but he or she who goes there may find proofs of more than one sort at the house of Sasamoto, and if the traveller is masculine, he will make no doubt that there is a fine eye, pink cheeks, and a soft pleasing voice in Nikko San.

As my love of prints and gardens was discussed, I was promised a visit to the garden of the brother of Sasamoto: this was the richest man in Nikko. One would not have guessed as much. He was of middle age, small, lithe, very tough-looking, and dressed in the garb of a peasant, with no addition or exception. He was clean, but soil grimed. He bore every indication of having devoted the whole of his life to hard outdoor



employment. I talked with him, through a boy interpreter, for a few minutes before discovering that he was the rich man of Nikko. The boy said: "He is so rich, he must work hard to spend some of the money. He own a lot of these hills and farms over the mountains. He like work always, and now he work like all these people. Always he work." I inquired, "Was he married?" and my question translated, the rich man and a knot of his workmen and workwomen saw some subtle humour in my inquiry, and they all laughed quite gaily. In fact, it was the only boisterous laugh I had seen escape the Japanese men. Yes, he was married. Do you ask why the difference of making a garden because he is or is not married? Oh no; only I wished to know if a house were to be built in the garden.

Ah, that was a very pleasant question, said the boy, and the rich man of Nikko said so too. He, too, would know my business.

Curiosity is a strong point with the Japanese. I had no card, but I satisfied him with my name written on a plant label.

He affected to hang it from his chest, with the other hand pointing to a tree; we understood and laughed together. The rich man sent for a kimono, and therefrom he produced his card. It held a good deal of print,

which the boy started to transcribe into English. Three or four times he wrote and rubbed out the words, and at last, desperate, he inquired of me, "What is the no drink wine?" I did not know, and I said so; but this was no answer. The boy began again, "What are the no-drink wine, the water drink, the very bad wine people, the good no-drink wine?" It dawned on me that the rich man of Nikko might be a brewer of ginger beer, and I worked on this idea without result. At last the boy found another word or two, and I was made aware that the rich man of Nikko was a member of some total abstinence society. This was the big excuse for his card.

Of his gardening efforts I did not think so much. The site was poor; all around Nature was a glorious and unapproachable rival. I saw trees, azaleas, and other shrubs two hundred years old, dug up without previous preparation, and brought into this garden. They looked vigorous enough, but vigour is not desired: only as much as will keep part of the tree or plant alive. We remain unconscious that the living roots of the oldest trees are young, and that old trees may be prepared for transplanting as readily as young ones.

The boy displayed remarkable knowledge of trees, especially of their ages and modes of manipulating them.

He was an assistant at the curiosity shop, and might have been excused if he had not known a deal plank from a living oak ; but, as I have said elsewhere, a knowledge of vegetable life seems to be in the blood of the Japanese. I do not think they are what we term students ; at least, they don't study in our way. They don't for-gather and contend and stew and keep their coats on and their hands clean. Their hands are never clean, and I do them no injustice in saying as much. Like the rich man of Nikko, they are fond of work.

Now to me this means a great deal. It means all that is possible as reward from any labour, a knowledge of the subjects involved in that labour. I can regret the absence from rural Japan of some things, but I can approve the rare knowledge, the sane content, of her people. It is better not to send our thoughts or our dreams far over earth ; when we would escape from what is about us, better that we look inwards rather than over the hills. There is no peace that way ; there is no imposing upon others, or learning of the lot of others to improve our own.

If the seven Happy Gods of Japan do not include the god of True Insight, he is there to bless them, though unknown, unnamed. Then they have the god of Good Hands ; this god drives out the ghosts of

Fearful Days. The god of Good Hands seeth that no toilers fear dark spirits or bad dreams. As it is ignorance that maketh man afraid, so it is insight of earth and her offspring that maketh the great companions, the fond eyes of the flowers, the safe arms of the trees. In the East no man is afraid of life or ashamed to live as a child, and the more he has learned by thought and labour, the simpler are his employments.

Far among the least trodden hills of Nikko I came upon a small temple or shrine. It stood in a little yard, bounded by rough wood and paper cottages, which were occupied by three equally old, equally parchment-like, and equally silent priests. They loved companionship so far as to sit in a row in front of one of the little cots, and perform what at first I concluded were acts of necromancy, for each was juggling with egg-shells which fitted over the soil in a broad low flowerpot. As a matter of fact, the old priests or hermits were covering maple seedlings with the egg-shells; and according to the length of time and the pressure exerted, the little seedlings would squirm and struggle more or less, and controlled by the mind of the tyrant masters, come to assume shapes characteristic of fortitude, strength, fear, or beauty.

As I stood in the pouring rain, and the three old men

sat in the pouring rain, I looking down upon them, and they never once deigning to look up or recognize my presence, I had some good heartening thoughts ; but they did not run to words, nor leave me any power of saying what I had seen and felt to be made so glad ; but on turning away, I felt that I had been in the very Sanctuary of Mystery and Romance. I was among the magicians and the men who control the destinies of men ; but I am no illusionist, and will write no more than that the few egg-shells and forms they laboured so idly and all silently to fashion seemed ample and honourable employment.

Nikko is truly a wonder spot, a glorious blend of mountains, forests, hills, and streams. Nowhere may one hope to see grander cryptomerias or of a more sacred and enchanting shade. There are many old roads and lanes leading off and up to mysterious shrines and gardens of the Eastern gods. Nowhere may one wish for more lofty and extended chambers between the trees and embowered ravines. It is the place of echoes, the floods of rain and cataract making all the sounds. The town part of Nikko resembles Cintra ; but its avenues of trees, its natural woods, its cataract rivers, and its peculiarly soft air make it a place distinct from anything to be found in Europe. The temple roads and

paths, the walls and other things in stone are designedly made to appear ancient. Ancient stone pavements are tossed and tumbled, as if wracked and wrecked by a sinking and ever sinking and shrinking floor. One sees this where one knows there could have been no natural subsidence or convulsion.

The Japanese love of imitation leads them to queer lengths, and often one is convinced that they have far more sense of natural truth than of natural beauty. In early June Nikko is as crowded as Hampstead Heath on an August holiday, for then the religious procession takes place, and all the queer paraphernalia of the shrines is put on parade.

The official programme ran :—

Here comes the Tengu (long-nosed and red-faced), with spear.

Here comes Shishi (the lioness), carried by three men.

Here come four Shinto Priests, with big fans.

Here come ten Monkey attendants, with Monkey.

Here come six Shinto Priests of Lower Order.

Here come fifty Shinto Priests of Lowest Order.

Nikko is a centre of gardening and dwarf-tree making, and some details of its art and craft will be found under that heading. A sample of scenic ornament and tree dwarfing may be imagined from the following: six taxus plants to one foot, two azaleas to nine inches, six rhododendrons, two maples, several ferns and pieces

of moss. All the above grew out of a piece of stonework of about thirteen by eleven inches ; the weight in actual soil did not exceed two pounds ; the space for holding water over the entire surface did not equal one half-pint. Everything was thriving, the size and the effect enormous, the scale of everything perfect. The study a joy for ever.

One does not soon forget Nikko, and as the sequel to my visit will show, I remain amongst the least likely to forget. Wanting more books on Japanese gardening, I sent a letter to Nikko San, and this is what she sent to me in reply :—

“ Nikko, 2nd. Feb. 1914.

“ To Mr. C. B. Luffmann,

“ DEAR SIR,—Receiving your kind favour, from London dated on 2nd. Jann. I am very glad to hear that you had returned from your happy and interesting journey. I suppose you have benifited your study about garden while you stay in Japan. My uncles garden aproaches to the perfect one gradually ; he planted many kinds of tree since you inspect his garden last summer.

“ It is much difficult that will get old books of Japanese garden and the art of growing tree. But I will search its books with my best.

“ New book about tree can easily find. But it will be quite useless to you. My uncle studied it by new manner.

“ At any rate I will search those book to you, and if I find I will send to you instantly.

“ Now, Dear Luffmann, I am very sorry to inform you that my father who acquainted with you, died out last 21st. Dec. with only one weeks illness,—pnemonia. I must succeed fathers business with the body of Woman with Manly encourage and resolution. So I want your kind sympathy. if you please recommend to your

friends that I have elegant exhibition of japanese fine art curios in Nikko. Specially I have procelain, lacquer, prints, brockades, metal works, Ivory works, intro, Netsuke. Here I enclosed my business cards.

“hoping your kind help and advice

“Yours truly

“Miss. I. Sasamoto.”

The correspondence proceeds !



## CHAPTER IX.

### A SURVEY OF NORTHERN JAPAN.

THE Japanese are apt advertisers, but liable to injure their cause from overstatement or repression. The country north of Tokyo holds much natural beauty and unfailing value, also many drab pictures and examples of shortsighted neglect, which it were better not to idealize or attempt to excuse. I rambled over and round about two thousand miles of Northern Japan, and above what I have said already, I came by the experiences and impressions forming the substance of this chapter.

The larger bamboos do not grow in the North, and one sees little of those materials which compose the pictures sent out from Japan. My rambles did not reveal a single bamboo bridge, castle, crane, except in a cage, nor anything made by man of any size, except the fine Buddhist temples at Matsushima and Nikko. The oldest things were the stone monuments and the cave dwellings. I did not discover the ideal and pictured Japan, except in the trees and the peasants; and

the latter want rare distance to idealize them, for the poor things were always of necessity very dirty.

Enoshima was a perfect thing of its kind—a little wooded island just off-shore, a bar of sand and shaky prop bridge connecting with the mainland. The quaint boats, neither painted, tarred, nor oiled, looked very unfinished, though in such numbers and enjoying such idleness as they lay in all positions, one felt there could be nothing more virtuous or sensible than idling, and, in truth, it was an idle time.

Here the net-rope is pulled in by the means employed by the fishermen of Spain—a short rope and piece of cork is thrown over the net-line to make fast and release automatically. With all the rare beauty of the hills and vales, the coast scenery of Japan is the most distinctive and beautiful. The river scenery is truly grand, due to the volcanic and sedimentary formations and the water-worn face of the country. Often among mountains or high hills one comes upon considerable strands of shingle and sand, reaches of silent or only faintly audible waters—a sense of primal peace and abiding security pervading all.

The mountainous region of Innai, south of Yokote, in the North-west, is a rare scheme of natural scenery; whilst a little farther south, Jimba, a jumble and tangle

of high and serried hills, is amongst the glories of Wild Japan. One evening I sat to watch the night fall upon these hills. For days and days the world had reeked of rain and flood, but, fine and the air warm, there was a general advance of mists and clouds towards the elevated land. All the highest peaks suddenly took fire as the last rays of the sun fell about them ; then wraiths, remnants, and streams of mist went up to put out what had seemed like saint-enkindled, sacrificial fires ; the winds blew a little less gently, as the cloudlets rose, and there was a hurrying and gathering together of many of the little white forms. With no time to be lost, large, old, dark, but friendly clouds moved out from the hollows among the hills, and enfolded nearly all the fearful children. Then the crowns of the hills showed through steam or smoke-like mists, a moment later to be banished by a wind which hurled the light and the dark together, put out the fires and the violet heaven, and left only blackness. At least there were none but black objects against the hills—giant cryptomerias, solid and hard as the pines in a Japanese print ; yet this was Nature.

With all the glory gone from above, I looked to the feet of the hills and the knolls which sprang out of the vales and interrupted and angered the river, as it strove for a straighter and easier course. All the banks were

carpeted with golden moss, prying little shrubs, and spring flowers. I enjoyed these friendly things in lowly places, yet I felt that our richest feelings may be at such moments when we take our flight with the clouds and colour masses among the mountains.

Conical stones divide the open plots of land. At rare intervals are rude hedges composed of mulberry and white plum. Also there are mud banks, formed by ditching to yield screens on some of the hills where cattle are raised. Pack horses and oxen are fairly numerous in some quarters ; but I saw not a sheep, nor a pig, nor any poultry, and there is great need of these, and much available food and water for them. In whole districts there is no sign of a garden or attempt at beautifying house surroundings. True, the native vegetation is so varied and irrepressible, and the peasant so poor or so busy, that it would appear absurd to cultivate more of anything. It is notable that there are no exotics. If a shrub or a flower blooms by a door, it has sprung up of itself or been planted there from a neighbouring bank or wood. The pictures produced by the azaleas are often sublime. At a railway station a little tree of a glowing terra-cotta grew higher than the railway carriage, and formed an arch over our heads as we sat waiting.

One sees cryptomeria forests where thousands of trees, felled and stripped of their bark, give a striking feature to many a hillside. The bark is taken off, and rolled neatly and put to various uses. The Japanese fell their trees by hewing out the bole, and when this is stripped like the trunk, it presents the appearance of a Corinthian column, and it is easy to imagine that some splendid palace is about to be reared, or that a mighty one has been scattered over a hillside. Apart from the timber getting, I was everywhere indignant at the neglect of the hills. The Japanese never crowned any Shepherd King. They have never touched their largest source of profit as agriculturists. They are mud-mongers, floundering and flopping about in their anæmia-breeding vales.

The tops of the Japanese villages beat ours, but we beat them in the bottoms. Their village streets are not picturesque, and they do not look clean : all are so black. Japanese walls and ground spaces are not as well kept as ours. Thatch is the most common roofing material of the peasant houses, and at a distance a Japanese village has a beauty and a charm unrivalled, especially if one is able to look down upon its roofs. The green crown of iris, which surmounts the thatch, surpasses our patch of house-leek or valerian or London pride.

To make mud stick to walls, they drive in nails or pegs and tie flax or grass thereto ; this is equal to putting hair or long chaff in mortar.

Charcoal is used everywhere, but more generously than is the case in Europe. The chibashi, or large bowl-shaped brazier, may hold a considerable body of glowing coals, and give off quite as much heat as a room requires. In a few districts the people make wood fires, and the end gables of the houses are made of open lattice-work to let out the smoke. It is surprising how quickly one becomes inured to cold. The going without boots, the thin walls, the draughty or open air chambers must kill or cure, and they do the latter in most cases and in quick time.

The handicrafts are the most primitive, and often fascinating. I watched men making steel saws by hand, to the shaving down and cutting out of the blade by hand tools only. Others were making straw coats, gouging out utensils in wood, and making brushes, brooms, and hairpins. Every one showed a fondness for shells, and a great many ornaments and utensils—as cups, bowls, trays, vases, and boxes—are made of them. The device by which the big kettle hangs suspended from the ceiling is very ingenious, and sometimes very ornate. Such a series of pulleys, cogs, and chains—I might not hope to describe it.

The beauty of wood is recognized everywhere. Not only in good houses, but in the poorest and meanest of villages, fine shapes are used in decorative work. In the second-hand shops one sees wood of all sizes—tree trunks to many feet in height, all knotted and scrolled and scarred by insects and natural forces. Big prices are obtained for these storied specimens, which are used to form and decorate rooms. To this end every gnarled and knotted surface is left, and only so much planed as will fit the adjoining wood or wall. In Japan they pull the plane, saw, and all other tools.

A valuable fossil wood is found in the marshes round Sendai, and near the railway station was a large sign, "Fossil Manufacturing"—the chief industry of this town. Every one must think that, even if there were no sign, for away from the military quarters the place is silent, black, and fossil-like.

The living reminded me of the dead ; they all looked like queer survivals out of a dimly-lighted past. Nearly all the shopkeepers seemed to be bent on hiding themselves between the walls during the short hours of daylight, and coming forth with a caw and a crow, which is the Japanese yawn and stretch, to work through all the night.

Immense plants of wigelia—bocconia, rosa rugosa,

kerria, and *prunus pisardi*—form complete thickets, and run rampant over the northern hills. In the Far North I found a beautiful *berberis*, with long spines and willowy rods of clean, green foliage, fringed with brown spots—height about two feet; also a red foliage maple with conspicuous red flowers larger than a sixpence; a deciduous magnolia; many hazels with variegated foliage, and some dwarf oaks of great beauty and variety. Seeing this glorious shrubbery and woodland made me conscious of the need of greater courage for cutting. Here not a bit of bare ground was to be seen; there was no end to the variety and no bounds to the freshness, beauty, and glory of it all, due in great part to the frequent cutting by the woodman.

On the extreme north coast, exposed and intensely cold, I saw over forty shrubs and woodland plants of size and distinct beauty and value to us. A dwarf, dense-growing *aucuba* would be a splendid cover for big shrubberies, shady banks, and our woodlands. There are many low, bushy varieties of alder with dark and bi-colour foliage. In the North-east I saw apple trees shaped and formed more intelligently than anywhere else in the world. All the branches were spaced and spread according to their vigour and angle from the trunk, every branch tapering to admit light and air;



result—flower and foliage of equal vigour and value to every part of the tree. This was not an isolated example, but miles on miles of trees all showed the same intimate knowledge and skill in handling.

I saw some remarkable evidence of Japanese knowledge of trees in the application of mat and straw cylinders, fully one foot in diameter, about the trunks of young two and three year old apple trees, and these cylinders filled with soil. In further proof of their skill, I never observed a tree in Japan planted too deeply, and I may say that in no other country have I seen a tree that was not. The Japanese grow fruit trees successfully on flat, wet plains or paddy fields by planning for a small tree, a mat-root system, perfect drainage, and crops between. The tree mounds run to two feet in height and never more than eight in diameter; the sides of the mounds are almost perpendicular. Apples are extensively grown, also some pears; though the best sites for these fruits, the low foot hills, are neglected. The mulberry trees and bushes are of all sizes and shapes; where the soil is warm, it is usual to grow the mulberry as a small bush, and the general appearance is that of plains or plots covered with currant bushes, with domestic vegetable and farm crops between the rows, which are usually about four feet apart.

Japan is singularly immune from frosts and drying winds, and their absence accounts for such generous and such heat-loving vegetation. At Nikko, two thousand feet elevation, I was told there were no spring frosts, slight freezes in autumn cutting short the growth, but never any ground frozen hard. Round Tokyo, barley was ready for cutting on the twenty-eighth of May. At Kamakura, on the thirtieth of May, I saw ripe barley, though the ground had not been dry for a single hour of the spring—in fact, it remained so wet that another crop was assured without further preparation of the soil, as the barley stood on ridges and the furrows were ready for the new seed or plants. In many quarters oats would pay better than rice. The oat would not hold the ground so long, call for so much labour or water—in fact, irrigation could be dispensed with, and better results would come from a dry and wet crop alternating.

The strength and industry of the Northern peasants is courageous. When driving pack animals or a cart the driver has a fagot or bale of something on his back ; no one can go unburdened or empty-handed. I never saw a man, woman, or child riding in a cart. I saw no two-wheeled cart—a small four-wheeled trolley is the medium of transporting heavy material, though almost all is carried on human backs. No light cart, no wheeled

conveyance of any kind for humans except the rickshaw, and that must be a rare luxury for the peasant. All the working class sweat violently every day, so that quarts of water escape them, yet they take only tiny sips of unsweetened tea from tiny cups. In all the North I saw but one tramp, and he made no appeal; so I felt I had been a member of a rather disgraceful fraternity. I saw several blind people, and many with weak eyes and dirty skin diseases. Not once was I molested, or subjected to the slightest rudeness. Personal pride of a calm and controlling kind possesses every one alike.

From an out-of-the way station I journeyed to Tokyo on a first-class ticket, though a third would have done, for the carriages were little more than trucks. Tokyo spreads over a mud flat, eight by six miles; in all the advertising notices it was given as one hundred square miles. That is the plan of what may be. I hope not. Too much tawdriness and worse appears in the new part already. The surrounding wall and moat of the Imperial Palace alone had interest for me, for the parks are not as good as they are painted.

Seüchi Kawamura, botanist of the Imperial University, proved very useful to me, and I promised to

send him a book on Japan, if I commit the indiscretion. On leaving Tokyo I crossed it in a rickshaw, the man never ceasing to run the five or six miles. I paid him fifty sen, or 1s. 1d., for his labour.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LITTLE TREES.

THE Japanese made no special effort to inform me of their tree craft. It now possesses a decidedly commercial value, and for this reason every one who has knowledge prefers to be silent and secret. No freemason, I do not believe in secrecy at all ; but I was interested in observing how news of my existence and my mission got ahead of me. I made a point of examining all the most beautiful and characteristic scenery of Japan, also the centres of treecraft ; but with rare intervals and exceptions I was little better off studying tree-making in Japan than I would have been in Kensington Gardens. In the midst of plenty, often I received no hint from man regarding his trees, and making allowance for his natural and newly acquired caution, I cannot think that the Japanese has the capacity to explain how he arrives at seeing and reproducing such scenes and subjects as form his ideal and consola-

tion, and which do little more than arouse our curiosity or fill us with childish delight.

The term Dwarf Trees is not correct, as we should say that the Japanese examples of miniature trees are dwarfed, and not naturally small. If they were natural dwarfs, there would be little art and less reason in making a study and employment of them. In the matter of selection, the Japanese is not interested or controlled by size. He may not make a natural dwarf into a forest giant, but he may control a possible giant till it assume its characteristic form and splendour, though only a foot or two in height or diameter. Nor is he satisfied with a small tree : there is nothing wonderful or clever or beautiful in that.

The Japanese tree-man desires to reproduce the largest trees and scenes in Nature on a small scale for convenience and economy. Also he wishes to make something so convincingly true and beautiful as to engage himself more and more to the object of his own artistic conception. Herein is a remarkable fact. The Japanese study of, and employment in, trees is an increasing study, an unending employment. It may not be possible within the whole round of human activity of mind or body to discover any other task which may be undertaken so early in life, serve well all the

way through, and give no hint of futility or failure at the end.

A thousand and one things are known to, and held as articles of faith by, the Japanese tree-man, most or all of which might be thought superfluous to Europeans ; but as there should be seekers after this rare hobby and unfailing fortune, as much must be said in this volume as may enable those interested to discern the causes and the purposes of the dwarfed trees of Japan. One may not begin with or think first of the tree as a tree. That is the artistic part, and before this may be conceived and developed, one must learn something of soil, scenery, and the play of the elements—all the material and conditions affecting plant life. Hence there must be a business sort of account of the things and methods employed by the Japanese before they come to the actual work of planting and controlling their trees.

Of soils, choice of pots, and watering.—The soils employed are as varied as the country provides, and one discovers no exceptional medium, no potting soils of Japan contrasting so much as the mixtures used in European pot-plant culture. It is practically impossible to find in Japan what we term virgin soil. Certainly there is no such thing near to towns and the densely-populated parts of the country. The intense-

culture system has turned and turned the soil times unnumbered. No soil is transported from one district to another. In fact, the class of soil does not matter much ; but of course it pays to select good material, and to compound and water it properly. To obtain the weakest and slowest of root growth coarse, threadlike new peat is necessary. Peat may vary from coarse, husky, and dry as cocoanut fibre, to a close-packed cake, sticky as soap, like black mud in appearance. This is taken from paddy fields or depressions of wooded vales, and is not different from that which may be found in any part of the British Isles.

I cannot pretend to describe what I know quite well, and which others who may or may not have been in Japan know very well—how it is possible to give much air to soil and retain moisture without frequent watering or shading. In a general way one sees in Japan no dwarfed plants on a dry or dense floor, nor on one which may attract and retain excessive heat. Almost always the pots, pans, tubs, jars, or whatever holds the trees, stand on thick soft planks, or on a hard floor covered with mats strewn with moss or something vegetable and feeding in its nature. This keeps the roots horizontal, or makes them squirm and assume fantastic forms.



At the most famous nursery in Japan the open-air stages are made of old flat-bottomed boats, turned upside down, and laid on posts. Most of the trees stand on these old boats and thick plank stages, ranging from two to five feet above the ground ; the higher or more exposed, the dryer the situation—hence less growth and more expression of the influences affecting form and character. The object of the damp-retaining platform or plank staging is to minimize the quantity of water to the trees by direct application, as the less water the better from the artist's point of view, if not from that of the tree.

It may be observed that I am leading up to the soil conditions favourable to dwarfing, and incidentally to the most common cause of failure of Japanese trees in Europe: excessive soil moisture, and excessively dry and hot air in rooms—for the Japanese do not heat their rooms or confine plants as we do.

In Japan trees occupy rooms, but these are usually as open and well ventilated as verandahs. With gritty, silicious sand, peat, sandstone, firm but mellow clays, highland meadow turf, chips of volcanic rock, pumice stone, old mould from country ditches, one describes practically all that enters into the composition (variously compounded) of the potting soils of Japanese trees. Of

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course there are some species which are given a decided type of soil—for instance, the best specimens of thuya, taxus, and juniper are found to be in firm loam, mulched with sphagnum-moss, or the pots wrapped with matting or other material during extra dry, windy, or cold seasons.

There is no difference in the potting mediums employed for home or exportable trees—in fact, there can be no thought of the ultimate home and end of a tree, since the time involved is too great. Moreover, as dwarf tree-making is one of the highest of the domestic arts of Japan, the work is carried on by tens of thousands of people; and as the trees are never shaken out and repotted, each tree grower does his best with his local materials, studies his own landscape and climatic effects thereon, and produces trees according to his own ideal and executive ability. Hence, a Japanese agent or nurseryman may obtain a hundred or more trees of one variety from as many sources.

This account should make it plain that there is no such thing as a particular kind or blend of soil, nor any special or secret method of sterilizing soil ingredients, or adding others to aid or retard the growth of trees. The country people stick pins and nails into the stems of cycas, as they say the plants need iron and won't grow without it. Certainly the pin-sticking

diverts the sap flow, and causes more fantastic if not more vigorous growth ; but tree-dwarfing is the result of the masterful knowledge of the plant as an organism, and of the manner in which it may be trained, treated, and kept alive over a practically unlimited number of years.

Against all our conceptions, our teaching, and our practice the Japanese prove that perfect health, soundness, and longevity are procurable by the use of solid and glazed pots and other root receptacles. It is most noteworthy that they use shallow pots and pans. One sees trees of great age, size, and vitality in pans not more than three inches deep ; also scores of little seedlings thriving in a pan and forming a wood or copse-like effect. Three to four years are enough to work out such a scene, and if no longer desired, each tree is dwarfed and ready for a pot or pan of its own.

The Japanese use absorbent and non-absorbent pots, pans, or jars with equal indifference. Pots and pans are holding and controlling mediums, nothing more ; or if more, they hold just as much soil as will enable a tree to preserve its existence.\* And in this I say emphatic-

\* The Japanese do not like pigs or anything fat. They regard all fat, bulky, and overgrown things as vulgar. Seven Happy Gods reveal all the fatness to be seen in Japan.

ally they are right. It would be nothing short of presumption to as much as think that they might not be right. They are always right where they deal with plants. Consider what it means to disregard the pot, pan, or tub, to see the roots feeding or growing, or trying to feed or grow. Knowing where the roots are, one knows their relative condition, and what they may or may not do for themselves and the trunk and the branches above. In our pots, and in our disregard of the study of roots, our pot plants usually make roots at the top, bottom, and side of the soil. The Japanese desire the roots to taper and decline in volume as they run out from the stem of the tree. They need the bulk of the roots above the surface of the soil that they may control and produce visible struggles and effects in root growth.

Hence it should be clear that it is the form, volume, and condition of the soil, each important in the order in which the words are placed, which determine the root systems and head systems of artificially dwarfed and shaped trees. Here one must insist that the Japanese soil-maker and tree-man is an imitator, not an inventor. He is not taught his trade in glass houses or within walled gardens ; he idealizes the things he loves and lives by. This means that he is, first, a student of the ways of Nature ; secondly, an artist employing his spare

time in reproducing his ideal conception of form and beauty ; and thirdly, an amateur engaged in love labour. Working on the land to know of the land, he sees what grows in different soils and places, also how and why it grows in such soils and places, and exactly what it does look like in such soils and places. He does really know and think, and think always, on these things ; hence he comes to be a master in the art of grouping and placing them in effective positions.

Summarized, the art involves :—

1. A subtle knowledge of the possible movements and sustaining powers of sap.
2. A knowledge of the influences of light.
3. A masterful conception of forms resulting from climate, soil, exposure, wind pressure, or its absence ; sun effects on root, leaf and branch arrangement and condition.
4. The long-continued study and practice of the art of tree-making.
5. The gift or philosophy of patience, which makes possible the art and practice of tree designing and training.

This tree craft leads to more or less specialization. Some Japanese devote their attention to root systems, some to trunk or branch systems, others to the whole tree ; and, as a rule, the last class are the most numerous and the least worthy of the name of master craftsmen. I believe it will be readily conceded by any one who has lived to enjoy the study and handling of trees, that

the most subtle study of all is that of roots. To manipulate them and secure response to every desired form and combination of forms is difficult indeed. To plan for rare and beautiful, and at the same time secure surprisingly natural and informing effect, is an almost magical achievement, and the author a true artist and rare craftsman. He is found in Japan and in Japan alone, for though the Chinese and other peoples of Eastern Asia build and contrive with living things, they do not conceive or evolve anything natural in design and truly splendid. Ingenious toys are all they produce.

So the Japanese artist in root design takes first place among tree-men. It is true we may see so many splendid combinations of root, stem, and branch growth in one and the same tree as to be convinced that many men exerted consummate and all-round skill; but we must not forget that no one man has produced a great tree. That is important. One may see no rare combination of root, stem, and branch forming a tree less than twenty years old. Many interesting specimens formed of free-growing and comparatively short-lived trees range in age from thirty to fifty years. The best specimens are not necessarily the oldest, as more art may be spent by three or four generations of men in one hundred years than ten or twelve generations of

men may bestow on another tree during three or four hundred years. One other point may be mentioned : a man who starts a tree determines its general shape, size, and length of life. Further, his root idea or design must be communicable to future generations of workers, or that tree will prove no rare example.

So many details crowd into a small compass—we Europeans are so accustomed to stand bewildered, or in a sense beaten, by the artistry and cunning of the little, old, and weather-beaten tree of nine by twelve inches—that we have not the patience nor the power to take it to pieces, so to speak, to look at it bit by bit, season by season, year by year ; and so it is for these reasons that we fail to perceive the high sense of art, the profound insight, the keen and persistent observation of Nature, and the inexhaustible patience of the one or many men who devoted their spare time to producing this finished work. One must repeat spare time : Japanese trees cannot be made in haste, nor do they call for frequent or regular attention. Love and knowledge control the labour spent upon them. The need of bread may keep a man from his tree, and a natural effort or decline yield more than studied labour.

The following is a list of the more important operations in the art and practice of dwarfing trees :—

Disbudding.

Pinching of leaves and shoots.

Tying down or warping.

Bark-binding—for restricting.

Tearing out of branches—to reveal age and character.

Damping and rotting wounds—for effect.

Plunging in earth.

Half-lifting, or raising roots above the surface.

Rock crannies for roots.

Root obstacles.

Planting—depths, angles, factors, mediums.

Adding branches by buds and grafts.

Defoliating—to secure new light wood.

Thinning of leaves and shoots.

Lacerating of bark and foliage.

Bark-bandaging—to aid sap flow.

Forming trunk and branch hollows.

Introducing fungi and vegetable parasites.

Bending and tying to stakes and rods.

Washing out of soil to starve roots.

Root-training.

Root design.

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So far as I have learned, there have been no stereotyped classifications of this art. Books on design of trees and parts of trees exist, also books on garden design; but I am not aware of any books attempting the explanation of the nature and art of tree-making.

No European gardener has any native conception of or ready capacity for this work. It holds not a thought of trade or vanity, nor a suspicion of need or haste. A Japanese man-made tree is a labour of love, a revelation to its author rather than a personal triumph; an example of Nature at her best—alive, audible, calling, singing, shivering, daring, resting, waking, trembling, struggling, complaining, telling her story, revealing her



glory, her everlasting effort, her purpose and her powers. The Japanese tree-man lives by what he understands, as we all should. So he works to discern and reveal the ways of Nature, his sense of line and balance enabling him to make wondrous beauty out of simple things.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MORE ABOUT LITTLE TREES

IN going about the country, one sees the widest variety in subject and treatment. Where, in a wild state, a tree is well designed or responds readily to human hands, and may be got ready for market within a few years, it is worked on by many, chiefly the farming and peasant class, though one sees many trees in the process of making in both small and large towns. Tiny yard, verandah, portico, and flat-roof spaces are often crowded with trees, which, it is hoped, will some day be good enough to market. One thing is apparent always : the trees reflect their places of origin or some region which the Japanese perceive to be singularly beautiful or characteristic of life as they see or feel it.

Those who visit Japan with no set purpose maintain that the land is all alike ; it is no such thing. It takes time to see differences, and it takes a long time to note great differences. When we come to a new land, we are in varying measure impressed by its difference from

that which we have left but recently. Nothing is familiar, distinctive. Especially we say that of human faces. It is the commonest remark everywhere that the faces are all alike ; this is want of regulated eyesight merely.

The traveller, wise or foolish, hath a tired eye ; he would see and yet rest, rest and yet see. To see truly, we must be familiar ; and before we come to be familiar, we must have rested and lived near to love-inspired things. All worthy labour is love labour. If we cannot see eye to eye with a people, we cannot discern any expression in their faces or arrive at a true appreciation of their forms of art.

The Japanese is part of all he discerns, and he idealizes some of his detached parts : and as these parts vary ; as he is of the snow-burdened or wind-swept mountain, of the dark ravine or bouldered vale ; as he is with other lives tucked on some ledge by the wild coast or half afloat among the mud and sand and mire of a shallow bog ; as he dwells amid the paddy fields or among rice terraces—those wonder-spots of many lands ; as he looks most on mountains, hills, or forests, green glades and streams, boulder stones and marshes, these single, grouped, and varied infinitely, he has come to see with eyes and heart aglow, familiar, always familiar things. He believes in what he has

known over many hundreds of years ; and with reverence as his best inheritance, he fashions in little what he has come to know as the greatest of good things, the earth and the trees thereof, whereof he is a part and for ever enshrined.

One may not overpraise this rare discernment of the Japanese.

Of all men he alone reveals the processes and disposition of Nature. All shape, all beauty, as the average mortal sees and estimates it, is on the outside of things, whereas all the working, all the instinct of life, chemistry, story, and things of highest value are within and unseen. The Japanese reveals and explains these things. Not to see a tree, but its story and its architectural beauty, that should be our aim. A gardener or orchardist observes it is a bad or a good tree—strong, weak, shapely, or otherwise—and knows no more, cares no more. Our glib descriptions, born of surface seeing, get in our way. Outside Japan I have met no soul who could read the detailed story of trees.

In a general way the Japanese never lose sight of the opportunity to accentuate any native grotesqueness or rare form in trees. One thing many must have noticed : their tendency to throw the tree far out of the perpendicular, whilst preserving its balance or equation.

There is a striking resemblance to the human pose in dancing, where the lower limbs thrown in one direction, the arms reach out in another to secure equilibrium. The examples of trees occupying escarpments and other insecure or wind-swept positions always suggest Bunyan's fine line, "Flying from the wrath to come."

The site determines size, shape, vitality, and duration. The mound and rugged escarpment compel the tree to assume a fantastic form and to proclaim its history. One must note the difference between dwarfing and training of trees, and also between those regularly cut to form by eliminating branches, and such as are assisted or repressed in any direction. Hence there is cutting to form, growing and training to form, starving to form ; all distinct operations with one aim—the perfecting of ideal conceptions of natural form. Always it must be noticed that a tree shows its natural place and position. It is from this or that class of country ; it is correct here and not there. Always it must be natural. There is no art till natural laws are known and respected. It is not how trees look, but how they grow. All seem bent on sleep or repose, or protecting themselves against some threat of storm, rather than revelling and rioting. The Japanese starve plants into perpetual existence, where we foreshorten their lives by overfeeding. True,

their trees do not suffer from drought ; the rain is frequent and the air moist always.

The Japanese make tree designs of stout wire, that the conception may be perfected and preserved. All design is governed by an intimate knowledge of what is (a) natural, and (b) distinctively beautiful. In practice no more is designed than the lines to be followed by the trunk and main branches, for it is the heavy and most permanent parts of a tree which decide its character and degree of beauty.

Much mutilating and rude injury is inflicted at times ; the tearing, twisting, and binding of boughs begins at periods varying with the kind of tree and the size and form desired. The binding of branches with stout wire wrapped in string is the ordinary medium of getting branches into position. Excepting pine branches, which are usually cut off close to the trunk, branches are left ragged, an inch or two projecting, to appear later as a sign of a natural fall or loss of branch. Tree parasites, both insect and fungoid, are foisted on the poor little trees ; also gall mites and such rare bits of wood as may be grafted on to reveal the strife and strain of existence.

The pine needles are shorn in August after rain. *Pinus densifolia* is the largest trained tree used in decorative gardening ; its branches bound with wire and rods

of bamboo to secure fantastic shapes. In Japan there is no limit to the size of artificially formed trees. One may see *pinus densifolia* up to eighty and one hundred feet in height and twenty feet in diameter, which have received skilful manipulation over most of, if not over all, their lives.

Of roots.—We have little working knowledge of the varying depths to which trees preserve their roots as vitalizing factors. The Japanese seek to express character in a tree as we do in a building or a statue, hence they keep the root as much above the soil as possible. It is easy to see how, by frequent reduction or checking of the head system, an exaggerated root system may be produced, and this may be made short, hard, and knotty, or long, soft, and flexible, at the will of the tree-man. A strong root bent will produce an excrescence or sucker growth on its top side and light prop roots below. The Japanese know this and so much besides as to act upon every possibility and contingency. The final arrangement of the main root system, usually exposed much for effect, cannot be done till a tree has been manipulated several times. In practice the trees are by turns planted high and low in the soil to encourage roots at various points, then dealt with to secure the desired form.

In a dingy street I saw a man giving his ideas on tree training to a group of urchins, who were keenly interested. He wanted a branch here, another there, and he showed how he would get it and what he would do with it. At a shop in Kyoto were three or four trees to three feet high ; they were narrow, upright thuyas, and had been dug up with about eight-inch diameter packs of peat and their own mat roots. I asked a man, "Where did those trees come from?" and he replied at once, "The mountains." "But they have been cut several times in the heads ; I can see the work." "Yes, the man who wants them, he go and cut 'em, make 'em all same you see there ; now he dig 'em up and sell 'em." "How old are those trees?" The man looked closely. "They're eight to ten years, I think ; one big one he more." I agreed they were eight to ten years from the seed. I could tell where they had been grown, and to what treatment they had been subjected.

Koi, south-west of Hiroshima, is a nest of tree growers and designers. Scores of gardens were full of trees in the soil, and in pots and other contrivances on stages. Here I examined trees in every stage ; also a great many laid trees, that they might break in the head and root to one side before potting or planting out. Laying the pots on their sides for a season and covering



with moss causes one-sided growth and twists in the branches such as are formed by wind pressure.

We Europeans have displayed a mild curiosity as to the origin and mode of forming the trees and scenes in miniature, and as for business reasons the Japanese have desired to mystify and baffle us, we have made no serious attempt to investigate and follow this art. Within the limits of these pages I have been more concerned to show or suggest the value of an informing and fascinating hobby than to attempt a full and complete description of the craft. More often than any other the question is put : How and where are the trees started ? To this I may answer briefly that seedlings are raised in pots and pans, also in the open ground. Hard floors are chosen to receive strips or ridges of mould ; in these ridges seeds of various sorts of pine and maple are sown, the character or form of the soil determining the form and substance of the first roots, thereby restricting the sap and affecting the super-growth.

Many trees are trained from natural seedlings found in the woods or in open country. In high tablelands throughout the world, as also where old hedgerows abound, especially on the banks of English lanes, are countless numbers of naturally dwarfed trees of many species, their smallness due to climatic influences, over-

crowding, or the persistent use of the hedge-trimmer's hook. Some years ago Mr. Rudolph Barr and I found perfect specimens of dwarfed maple and *quercus ilex* on the battlefield of Vittoria in Spain, and I remember also that we agreed to a friendly difference of opinion concerning the places of origin and the natural and domestic history of some Japanese trees. Here I am able to state that some Japanese trees are entirely man-made, others are in great part nature made ; some are the result of layering branches, and inarching and tongue grafting is practised on such boughs as are seen to represent tree forms.

If the Japanese have deceived us in either making an inexact statement, or by making no statement at all, neither their art nor their skilful handicraft is affected. It remains an informing, distinct, and matchless study and employment, as fit to engross Europeans as it does those whom one may with complete respect term the Ingenious Gentlemen of Japan.

To appreciate the detailed structure, the life struggles, and the transcendent beauty of trees, we must look up and through them, not down upon them or at their dense impenetrable exteriors. Then one comes by great increase of knowledge and pleasure where trees are seen with sky for background, especially if under the shadow

of night. For just a few minutes in the evening—the quality of the effect varying much at different seasons of the year and states of the atmosphere—at daybreak, and in thick winter weather, trees stand out naked and readable, yet clothed in their full majesty. But we should not seek for majesty in size or form or tone. We never admire so well, or come by such rare sense of life, as when we fully understand the source and substance of natural forms.

First, we should be able to read the natural history, no matter how old the subject or how many successive crops of branches may have sprung from the same trunk. We want to see the cause or causes of all that remains as size, as form, as beauty. We need to be charmed by the life-story of the tree. It is the life-struggle, the everyday effort, the signs of loss, the expression of fear and triumph, a conflict of these in every part of every aged specimen that can arrest, inform, and satisfy any who are concerned for life. It is true that one must not only be observant, but pass a great deal of time in looking into trees, before proving competent to handle and train them. The European custom is to praise and see beauty in a tree extra large, or extra valuable, or rare as a species or variety; the details of design, their story, their value, are not considered.

So if one would deal with trees as do the Japanese, it is necessary to study them as they are in a state of Nature ; then, as the insight and the knowledge grow, to discriminate between the rare and conventional forms, the influence of position, climate, soil, form of the land, degree of exposure, and all that may be summed up as the phenomena of Nature. So, step by step, one will be led to select and come by conviction which types are most picturesque, most storied, most inspiring. Some bits of country will voice their claims, others not ; and it is where one sees the tree a distinct output of the land and the influences bearing thereon, that one will have a sense quickened to reveal materials and forms that blend to yield a living, storied picture, be it small or wide.

## CHAPTER XII.

### AT THE MOON OF NARA.

AT Nara I found an excellent inn, to the Japanese known as the Tsukinoya Yadoya, and to me by interpretation as the Moon Tavern. At once I was told that guests were expected to bathe at four o'clock, towel or no towel. That there might be no mistake, or chance of escaping the ceremony of removing the honourable dirt of the honourable journey, at half-past three a little maid of seventeen came and ordered me to the bath. As I had arrived tired, I pleaded for tea first, and she yielded reluctantly. It is a custom at inns to supply kimonos as dressing-gowns, also slippers, but in no case a towel or soap. At Nara I had two kimonos, one of cotton slipped inside one of soft silk.

After the bath Nara San, like a fond mother and stern priestess in one, sat down to the entertainment and ceremony of making me feel at home. To her it was a sort of lesson in the geography and the beauty of her neighbourhood. From a niche or concealed cupboard

in the wall she had withdrawn a piece of black, white, and gray conglomerate which had been carved and chased to represent a score or two of miles of typically Japanese scenery. I scanned it eagerly and fondly, and with unmistakable signs of appreciation ; but a European, I wanted more, and I looked round or signed my wants to Nara San. Child as she was, her indignation was complete. Only a glutton or purblind savage could want more in a day than she had placed before me.

This subject has been pursued by other writers on Japan, so I will say only that one does not know which to admire most—the skill of the artist in stone, wood, or ivory, or the loving care and intelligent pride of those who afford instruction and delight to the traveller. They will sell a whole range of mountains with all their valleys, wet and dry and wealth o'erladen, for a few pence. In the shops, as in my rooms, I was often charmed, bewildered, and royally entertained in examining models of the country I had explored or looked on as I moved about.

As it rained hard, just as is shown in Japanese prints—great, black, and almost solid streams of rain—I lay in my room and made notes. I could not write—nothing had been big enough, purposeful enough, sane enough to invigorate and spur me. Instead, I was flat and

incapable. Too much change of diet or water, or not enough of either, had made me weak in body and destitute of mind. I looked ahead, which I contend is a bad thing to do, as life should be in the present everywhere. I watched the three maids repair and make clean beds. In sewing, they do not use a thimble with a cap, but instead a broad loop of steel with hollows in it like a shoeing smith's file ; this encircles the middle of the big finger. I went for a walk, and bought some combs and prints ; returning, my lizards held court, to which came the local Editor. He sighed wearily on bowing, hitting the floor with his head ; then he looked at me, and sighed again. The lizards charmed him. He asked for my card, and getting it, he read it earnestly upside down. I did as much with Japanese, so why laugh at him ?

Mine is a queer world, due, I suppose, to my looking for things odd, or making no effort to travel in even places. In the morning I did not know what passed during the night. I had experiences and I had dreams, and in all honesty to myself I could make no distinct and sure division. Not that it mattered. All of us dream more truth than we experience. Our thoughts are fictions, yet our whole life is made of them. Late at night the tiny maid stayed and tried

to talk with me after she had made my bed and seen me into it. She said "Good-bye," because she could not say "Good-night." Two or three times she said it, went and came, went and came, as if loath to leave me, till at last she was gone, and I went to sleep.

After a time I heard a heavy man walking with measured step along the hanging balcony by my room. As he stepped, he click-clacked with two little cylinders of bamboo, or perhaps one cylinder beaten with a stick. I was not alarmed. Instead, I was interested, and sat up to wait for more of this faint music of the darkness and the midnight. The man passed my room, slid back a movable wall, and entered another chamber, still stumping and still click-clacking. On he went from room to room, making a suspicion of a halt at each. Evidently he knew the house well, and by the noise he made I became aware of the plan of the third and top story on which I was lying. It occurred to me that the visitor was a sort of fireman, or perhaps the host making an inspection before going to bed. Sure that he meant no harm to any one, I went to sleep. Before doing so a clock in my room struck two, and one in a room adjoining hammered out four.

Then followed a heavy and adventurous dream. I was helping a man to pull a load of timber across the



shingle bed of a shallow river. As we were in a chronic state of stuck, I cursed the river and the forest, most of all I cursed Japan for preferring trees to grasses and human asses to pull their loads. I was in a regular boiling sweat, and giving an extra tug or push at the load, I threw off the great quilt which otherwise would have smothered me, and lo ! again came the night walker. I was awake now, I was sure of it. My paper walls were partly withdrawn, and I could both hear and feel the effect of a straight-down rain.

The night watchman went his round as before. The same pace, the same sounds from his feet, the same little halts, and the same click-clack from the bamboos, or whatever he carried, to reassure listeners more nervous than I. But it was weird indeed. There is a wide difference in the sensation from rousing to hear the night watchman in the street, and from waking to feel he is stalking from chamber to chamber at midnight and later, in those thin, cold, loneliest of hours : that time of night when we are least alive. On hundreds of occasions I have been awake alone at such hours, not amidst friends and security, but stark, far, and alone in the world. This feeling of isolation and uneasy dread must have come to all who have had such night experiences as to make them wish for day.

In this instance I did not fear at all. It was an eerie but a fascinating hour. I felt as I do at writing, the strangeness, and I wondered if custom could ever make the night visitor welcome and companionable even. All I heard was one deep-voiced growl from a man to himself, or perhaps to his bed-mate. The complaint came from a distant room, so its author must have had convictions, or he could not have spread them so far. I looked at my watch. It was just two o'clock. Dear me, I thought, this is regular if the clocks are not. Will he come again at four? It would be light before five—no need to expect him more than once. He had fired me till I was independent of bed and sleep. I pushed down the great, stifling wad of quilted silk, and without effort passed into living through the ages of Nara.

I do most of my travel by night. Silence and nothing to see gives me room to think about pilgrimage. My eyes can never be idle if there is a thing in sight, so I have been glad always for strength to lie awake and make voyages. I need no seas nor ships, no money nor patronage. With Time I have enough. That night at Nara took me back to times of which I had read, and to times of which I had no notion. Yet I will own I came by nothing splendid. To me Japan had never known greatness. I would not accept

for a high place any people who had never learned to build in stone. History is in The Stone. We have nothing but the builder to keep us informed of human aim and human art. I will not accept woodcraft as final. It was long since superseded, surpassed, and, whatever Japan may think, other people have thought better and builded better than they.

The roofs of houses at Nara are many of them convex, evidently borrowed from the design of some of the old Temples. One of the hills above Nara is free of trees, clean and well grassed for the tame or sacred deer of which the place swarms. Here is proof of what may and what should be done over most of Japan. The shrines of Japan are fashioned of water, fish, and trees. Seriously, I wonder do the Japanese persist in building of wood because they worship it so? Everything points to the dependence on wood—fire, habitation, implement, arm, boat, beauty of landscape, image, seed, fertility.

Japan is Shrineland. For years I had been a seeker of shrines, and had not thought it necessary to turn to Japan. Quite other interests took me there, yet Japan of all lands is most bestrewn with shrines. The temples of Nara are delightful, so is a bazaar; but neither was ever great. We may extract a wondrous and subtle

power from those three simple words—Rock of Ages. Where men do not forgather in solid Christian churches and mosques there can never be that security, that sense of Divine Presence, that atmosphere of heaven, by which we are awed and brought to fullest life. Buddhist shrines and temples are places of money-making. They yield no balm for the reasoning soul. But the pilgrim hath no reason. All gods and their thrones are the fortune of those who have no higher sense of fortune. There can be no difference in shrines—the motive is the same, to gull and to extort money. No shrine is found in a plain place. Nature fashioned and compels respect for every one of them.

One side of me admits the value of these places ; they are as good to be worshipped as any other. Japan has the theatre, the tea house, and the Yoshiwara ; her Happy Gods and her wrestling men, past and present. She lives on very little, and she hopes for very little. Just now what she hopes for I do not know ; but in one way she lives, as do other nations, by perpetuating a faith in impossible things.

I was glad that I visited Nara. It was easy to agree with the writer of the *Ideals of the East*, that Nara represents the best Art in Japan. At one time she had a mind, but evidently it did not grow and sway many

generations. The size, proportions, and some of the workmanship of the wooden temple of Daibutsu are truly imposing, and the manner of construction very ingenious, daring, and secure. Two modern stone shafts rest on pediments of lotus buds inverted. The cloister and court are practically identical with the Christian work of the eighth century in Europe. The priest and his penitents, the pence and the pardons, are all on a par with those of Western lands. One is asked to save this building from ruin, and not to risk ruining one's chance of paradise by parsimony.

Pilgrims never vary ; wanting the same, possessing the same, bringing the same, they all deport themselves as pilgrims must everywhere. In Japan the handkerchief and little home-made bag carry the few things necessary before going to the shrine. The vast majority are peasant folk, and it seemed that they made the visit when they were best able to do it in comfort—after a good harvest, or good sale of something, rather than as tatterdemalions with hard peas in their boots. In fact, they had no boots, but trudged and limped and lilted in sandals and pattens, high and low ; they carried long staves of new, cleanly-peeled wood, making one think of palm or willow branches. As it rained always, they kept off some of the water by sheets of oiled paper—

yellow, gold, and brown ; and very picturesque and warlike the crowd looked at times, marching up and down in their bright cloaks amid the drenching rain.

One found it easy to like it all. There was no one to pity, no one to blame. No one seemed to need any more. They were at the place of their heart's desire ; and though all looked tired, and doubtless most of them would be glad when they got safe home again, still it was a big change from the paddy fields and the plains. The voice of the great bell was more companionable and never as forbidding as the marsh crane or the sea. Fisher folk and valley folk, town and country folk, commingled, looked, and said nothing, marched and said nothing, ate and drank and said nothing, and this was a Japanese holiday. If any spoke, it was at the shops where memorials and charms were sold.

These shrine shops were in scores—I think I might write hundreds—and their contents would surely run to millions of articles : images of deer in wood, clay, and metal, fish and flags, combs and hair ornaments for women and girls, knives and pipes for men and boys. Horn lanterns and stick handles were a feature, and a countless variety of figures in carved wood, horn, and plastic material. At a glance all were childish gewgaws, but they meant just as much as better things to those

who profess to live by better things. A memorial is a memorial, let it cost a penny or a pound. I spent my spare coppers on a few old prints—seven I got for about ten shillings, and mighty pleased I was with my bargains. But as it rained persistently, I could not exhibit my prizes up and down the streets and among the shrines, and thank God or Buddha with as much calm conviction as did the other pilgrims.

One paid from a penny to threepence to enter the various shrines, and there the pilgrims knelt after throwing coins on to platforms or into huge boxes. Clapping their hands that Buddha might hear, they would kneel and mutter their appeals, get up, shake their skirts and seek another shrine, till their pence and strength were exhausted.

A Japanese book, a sort of guide, had this of Yamada : “The chief industry of these people is to feed peacefully upon pilgrims who come to be taken in.” Now that unintentional bit of fun applies to Nara also. Twelve hundred years ago Nara was the capital of Japan, and ever since it has been making capital out of those who come to see what a capital place was the old capital for losing capital. But, as the chronicler saith of the people of Yamada, so of Nara, “They fed peacefully.” No one tried to feed upon me ; in fact, when I paid for

anything it was at my own price, and I believe one old gentleman cherishes the belief that I fed on him. I must call him a gentleman, for he had such a benign and Buddhistic expression, and a way of nursing one hand in the other as if assuring the nursling, that sooner or later one would come and put a copper in its itching palm. The old gentleman was a master of the art of conquering by yielding, for he let me have a print for a shilling, for which he asked ten; then he asked twenty shillings for a print which should never have been printed.

I declined to take advantage of him further, and he smiled an assurance that I was welcome to come and take advantage of him again. I did not. In plain truth, I was afraid I ought not to take the risk. The worst bargains I have made were with old men and young girls. The old men can speak with such authority, and near the grave there is a limit to their powers of lying—so one thinks, and so one is deceived. As for the girls, they stick at nothing. I don't know how it may be with other men, but I have never been able to believe in the existence of an ignorant girl. To me she must know or appear to know, and one equals the other. Then I am a victim to every pretty appeal, and might haggle for an hour with a little minx and have no thought



of cheating her. The essential joy of a bargain is in finding something you like from your soul, and getting it at your own valuation.

It is no riddle of words to say that a thing is as good as one's price. If ever I ventured into business, I would keep a curiosity shop, and the curiosity about it would be myself. Trade and barter would never keep me above the daisies, for if I bought only such things as I loved, I should want them round me ; they would be more comforting than any number of bank receipts and paper promises to pay on demand.

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At Nara I saw a wisteria with a trunk more than four feet in diameter, four feet from the ground. At a height of about fifteen feet it forked, and each limb was then about twenty inches in diameter. This plant, or tree as it was, spread over eight or nine large trees, and covered about a quarter of an acre. There were hundreds of plants but little smaller. Maples of the most feathery types grew to seventy or eighty feet.

Trains came to Nara every hour or less, and not one without a crowd of pilgrims. This was no special season, unless it were specially wet ; but that made no difference. Two or three crowds of schoolgirls came, and the backs of these made the streets gay, as each girl

wore a bright red under-kimono which the rain forced her to show, for she held her plum-coloured skirt to the waist and other garments above her knees, so that there was a queer exhibition of clothes and limbs ; and with all my love of both, in this instance neither was beautiful. The fine night caused the shopkeepers to light up and stay up to catch the pennies of the many pilgrims who swarmed the town. Thousands went by the trains, and it seemed as many more stayed.

Our house was crowded, but quiet as ever. The click-clack man came each night at twelve and two ; I thought he moved more carelessly, not minding who woke or who slept in his presence. The last evening at Nara a swagger party of pilgrims went by, evidently a Shogun and his son, a little smaller gun. The big gun wore a well-cut, extra long frockcoat, with silk lapels and a silk hat. Also he did his best to walk like a European, whilst his wife slip-slopped beside him, in native dress and carrying a baby on her back. At Kobe I saw an equal case, only my lord was in a brave summer suit, flannels, silk shirt, silk socks, white shoes.

At five in the morning my ever giggling little maid appeared with tea and a giggling command to get up. She put in a full two hours, brushing my garb, packing my kit, and making it something of a trial to say Good-

bye. Almost my last feeling at Nara was one of thankfulness that I lived next door to the railway station, otherwise I might never have got away ; the sheets and walls of rain would have forbidden. The town stands high up on the slopes of noble hills and glades ; streams, pools, and little lakes are everywhere in sight, but they were dry affairs compared to the whole expanse of heaven-weeping rain. I saw no tear, heard no cry in Nara ; but lord, if I lived there, I should cry aloud, if only for fine weather.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE LIFE JAPANESE.

BOOKS of travel are said to need an atmosphere. That is not easily thrown around and about every page of a book on Japan. At first I imagined odours and atmospheres which did not exist outside my brain. If I got a few whiffs objectionable, they were that only—not bad, dangerously bad, odours. There are odd things in Japan: the country is not private, for the people go everywhere and enter everywhere without knocking, and the town is not public or composed of people and habitations only. Looking out over dingy black roofs, one sees the spaces between filled with the softest, greenest, and cleanest of vegetation, and never an open space but has a plant or two, which, small, are big features in the scene. One cannot think of Japanese town plants as imprisoned, starved, and wretched bits of Nature out of place.

This pronounced love of flowers, green plants, and trees is bred more of the Japanese eye or inward sense

than of the nose. They care little for perfume of any sort ; colour and form appeal, but always form comes first, as it should ; and so engrossed are they by the shape and tone and significance of life outside their own that they disregard the mere detail of perfume. This is no defect. The strong winds bring nothing, the soft moist airs breed nothing, in the way of perfume or atmosphere. Come hot rain or cold rain, the earth gives off no reminder of its store. There are few perfumed plants in Japan, and these do not affect the sense much.

With a silence in Nature and in man which I had not noticed elsewhere, with little appeal by sweetness in the plant or the flower, the winds or storm-drifts from seas without saltiness, winds borne up the wet valleys, winds borne down the green mountains, winds winding snake-like, visible almost, around and down among the paradise of hills—with all this expression of movement, spirit, and sanctity, there is little if any fragrance or refreshing balm. One found no pungency in the moss, no smack of storm and adventure in the wrack by the shore. With ample leisure, all my days were for looking and lingering over things, and often I had cause to linger over things absent. I did not grieve the loss, or think the Japanese unfortunate or destitute of many things worth having, for the worst

of things worth having is that they cannot be lost or laid aside without making misery for us. So I came to believe that Japan has little or no natural atmosphere, and that equally little is bred or desired by the Japanese amongst themselves.

Seldom do we stop to examine our oft-repeated remark, "pictures of misery." Beyond question, some forms of misery provide pictures, and they need no idealizing or painter's eliminating brush to round them off for our gratification. But in Japan no one will see misery. I may have used the word in preceding pages for want of a better, but I repeat that in Japan one will see no misery. This is the age of many faiths, and there is room for more. There is room to believe that in this life and this world there is no room for complaining of the pains of to-day and laying odds against the pleasures of to-morrow. That is Europe. What they do with quailers and croakers, if they breed any in Japan, I do not know, but I could not see or hear of any. Make no mistake : I leave no class out of my observations. I employed my time in looking into the Japanese way of living, and although it is neither here nor there to say that it wouldn't prove enough for Europeans always, it is bred out of a faith and moderation which I for one can believe in and commend.

As I have written elsewhere, the Japanese cultivate the art of not seeing. We may add to this the arts of not hearing, not knowing, not fearing, not minding, not needing. Now, exclaims my reader, but this is rank Fatalism, and breathes European wrath into every letter of the word. Well, and what if it is Fatalism? It does not mean that one is spiritless, effortless, purposeless : the Japanese are none of these. There must be a little difference in believing and living in such a way as will make one happy or make one miserable. I do not say that Europeans know nothing of happiness, but I do say that it is easy to prove that the Japanese know less of misery in mind and body.

Again, I may be met by the remark, "Oh, but if we suffer, the suffering is of the Splendid kind, the result of our high development." It is no such thing ; it is of Tom Fool and his wife's kind. There is a misery-making conspiracy between them whatever they have got ; they must be after more, and whatever they are, they must fight and scream and vow and pray they'll be different. As the philosopher hath said always, "It is ignorance that maketh man afraid." The Japanese have made themselves familiar with all near-by things ; they have put Nature to such full use as to know that, as the seasons run, the horn of plenty never can run

low. They have the Holy Gourd. They have no more thought of changing water for wine than has the red deer on their hills, or the fish of their rivers and seas.

What is the good of our wise man saying, "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her," if we stand off and admire or make patronizing remarks on the splendid things of earth? We have lost by striving to separate ourselves from Nature. It is here that the Japanese are so much saner, so much more secure than we. It is not liking or praising but understanding things which yields most, and they understand. They live by what they feel and know. If their content is not bred out of knowledge lofty and sublime, it is better than ours; they live with better grace. Discontent is a bad sign. I am so convinced of this that I avoid all discontented folk. I have heard of Divine discontent; also, I have heard of and met many who were discontented out of their unreasonable desire for unprofitable things.

I like a country where the art of life is put into practice, and kept out of books and the schools. For a time I may idealize a place, a people, and their employments, but always I strive to discern the realities. Japan did not escape me. I saw what her people were



living by. To write truly of a people, we must discredit our experience of individuals. We must look to causes for effects. We are all given to lay stress on the word "temperament"—to say that as there are many races of men, many natural resources and employments of men, so must there be native differences in thought and ways of looking on life. All human institutions are the outcome of these differences in fortune. To me the Japanese are true to their land. They are out of it, part of it, and though they may be proclaimed a race of warriors and colonists, as are the British, yet they reflect truly all that may be caught and held from the surface of Japan.

To me their choice of food means a good deal, as it affects them, as does the lightness of their garments and the everlasting presence of fresh air. I say fresh, for it is never murky or polluted—at least I nowhere found it so. Japanese food and raiment support the body, where they do not stir the mind. If the people hurry through the street, it is to be rid of the burden and to find repose at home. The lack of enduring habitations must prevent the growth of a strong faith in man-made things. The earthquake, the fire, and the flood are with them always. They do not build out of vanity, nor for security. They confirm the splendid truth, seldom

understood to be believed and relied on, that the Kingdom of Heaven is within themselves.

In Japan, if a man's house is not his castle, his back yard is his paradise, which is far better. The subtle desire for privacy, distaste for conversation, and intense capacity for looking at living things—these are the conspicuous features of the Japanese life. It is incredible how long they stare; or, more correctly, how silent, wrapped, bowed with hands clasped and half-closed eyes, they will contemplate anything that is new to them, or seems good.

The Editor at Nara, when he saw my Gekkos, knelt over them as if in prayer. He craned his neck to count them, make out their form and size; then he settled down to study them. One side of me wanted to make fun of him; he looked like a general of war, who, sighting the enemy, was saying to himself, "At this minute they are too far away; meanwhile I study them, that I may have them in ambush before breakfast to-morrow morning." The other side of me was as spellbound as the Editor. As he studied the animals, I studied him; but he gathered most, I know, and I will own that he did. When he left me after his half-hour's visit, he knew more about the speckled, checkered, and striped skins of Gekkos than I, who for months and

months had carried round half a dozen of them in a box under my arm, or everlastingly at my elbow.

So I am at my favourite study again—the Japanese Eye. To be frank, it is not a nice eye, and let me give the owners a friendly hint : they will have to learn how to use it, or how not to use it, before most Europeans will believe in them for good and all, and like them better. It is a suspicious and cunning eye ; most of all, it is mistrustful. A dog and a monkey are both capable of giving the same look. It may be a physical defect with many, whose eyelids cannot be opened, to show the pupil or the apple even ; but where the eye is open enough it wants sympathy, frankness, and definite expression. They try to hide their thoughts. It is still a wild eye, and with all their power of seeing, their motives are inscrutable and not agreeable to us.

I could not gratify my desire for market folk, for they hold no markets in Japan. Hawkers are numerous, and they are the only class creating vocal noise. Some call, some chant, some seem to be saying prayers—backwards, I suggest, for there's an awful lot said for every customer who appears. The more enterprising pedlars save their voices by blowing horns and whistles, and the chap who sells rice fritters from a volcano on a barrow uses the surplus steam to blow a piping, peet-

ling whistle, which goes on till the very last coal is a cinder and the very last fritter is fried.

One reads of many gods in Japan. They choose one of food. An ingenious people, they invent for all occasions and situations ; but I did not discover that they had a god of work, though it is evident that they regard work as a virtue more than as a necessity. This saves the face of the crowd in Japanese towns. They are all busy, or, if they should be waiting, it is with more anxiety than Micawber, for they do not smile whilst unemployed.

In Okayama they make a special business of manufacturing Happy Gods in clay and imitation metal. Some shops are devoted to the sale of Happy Gods. These chaps are all of Falstaffian mould, with ears swollen at the lobes, which hang over their shoulders like apple dumplings ; also they have milky breasts and aldermanic tummies ; their faces are not so round, though they look overblown and watery. I don't know how the Happy Gods acquired their rollicking magnificence, but it always seemed to me that they had been poaching in the waters of the Holy Carp, and flying their kites at the expense of the industrious and sober citizens of Japan.

Of Japanese mirth and festival I saw little ; nor

did I see as many lanterns in Japan or iris flowers, lilies, or chrysanthemums as the corresponding time would have revealed in rambling round England. The Holy Carp gives exhibitions of ærial swimming wherever there is any air stirring, for through May, June, and July he hangs from thousands of poles outside houses and cots of all descriptions everywhere. Oddest of all, the girls do not carry fans, nor do the men, except the rare few. The fan plays its part in the dance and some domestic ceremonies, but it is not in evidence everywhere and always. One sees the girl and woman in full fig and never a fan.

An energetic friend\* vows he will "chuck" me unless I tell the truth about Japan. Without a blush I say to tell the truth is not so easy. "No man can tell another's story without some involuntary misrepresentation of facts and characters. . . . Only he who is himself dishonest will doubt my honesty."—Samuel Butler in *Erewhon*. In writing I have had no greater desire than to tell the truth, and where I wrote most truly the testimony appeared most unlikely. The truth is too strong fare for most of us. Japan gives ample room for false descriptions, exaggerations, and misstatements. What my friend fears I may not state is

\* He is sleeping in Flanders.

that Japan and her people are not so gay, so soft, so bright in colour, so fairy-like and dream-like as most Europeans proclaim and the Forward Party of Japan would have us believe. Except the Theatre Street, which is a blaze of colour—and there is one in every town—and the children under six or seven years of age, there is no colour, brightness, or picturesqueness in the Japanese crowd.

The daintiest, most bewitching, idyllic thing in all Japan is the head of the country girl, when it is tricked out with the little moth's-wing blue and white handkerchief, which is tied and flaunted in such a way as to make her a picture and a flirt entire for all the world.

The villages often appear as patches and heaps of black or brown mud, ever in low-lying positions. No Easterner loves the hills, and that may be one reason why one thinks so often of the East as soulless. There is too seldom any sign or concern of any mystical better things, no belief in improvement or the grand concerns of making change. I admire this, and I object to this. There is something better than rude and continuous primitivism—something finer than stealthy opposition to Western civilization and the best it yields. Poverty means dirt on the body and cobwebs in the brain. But can a brain grow of itself? And who is able to affect

and change the elements of the East? Has it not been termed the Unchanging? It is all as ever it was. The Japanese who has gone East to return, and West to return, brought in the train and all that follows in its train, except the desires of the West, the soul of the West, the purposes of the West, and the dreams and realization of dreams in the splendid order and love and charity of the West. Considered in this light, I vow that there is no knowledge of or striving for these things in the East.

An old writer reminds us that when we would make comparison of a rather dull body, we should think of medullin, the pith of the sunflower, which he avers hath neither taste nor smell. This leads me to say that Japanese life is wanting in freshness, breadth, and thrilling delights.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### INNS AND ISLANDS OF THE INLAND SEA.

THE traveller who is sustained by constant thoughts as lover, relation, or friend, who preserves a feeling that he is hunting for treasure which he will bring home and offer with gladness, is on many occasions convinced that those at home are better off, and glad that he bears discomforts, mysterious fears, and the pains of isolation alone. All the blank spaces, the dull, unprofitable days, are to be endured in silence. But when his dragging feet bring him to some delight out of heaven ; whenever he shall come to a place deserving to be known of all mortals ; whenever he shall have his soul awakened with generous desire to transmit his joy to all men—it is then he is a happy and a large man, then that he knows nothing of weariness or distance from the goal ; and it is out of such rare and far-divided joys he comes to live, as do others, between gaps of monotonous and fear-encumbered Time.

I wrote the foregoing paragraph to myself on the



morning after my arrival at Miajima (Temple Island), the jewel and poem of the Inland Sea. For many weeks I had held this island in prospect ; but I had work to do, and everywhere there was much to see. The Inland Sea revealed its beauties to me on a lovely, soft, sunshiny morning at Kobe, when the great bay or roadstead lay smooth and silent, and far and wide were spread thousands of little boats with their silver and yellow and light-brown sails. Sampans and barges, boats queer and queerer still, big sailing-ships from Europe, and steamers from all directions—there they lay, idling the lot of them, or so they appeared as our road wound round a splendid range of wooded hills and mountains, whence spurted and tumbled cataracts and streams, making industries of many kinds an everlasting possibility.

At times I felt I should have saved all my praise for the seductive beauties of the Inland Sea, the waters are by turns so green, so gray, so silvery, and so blue ; then they yield such black shadows to put you off and lure you on, all in the same moment. In a diary note I had written : “ A journey from Hiroshima to Miajima afforded my richest day in Japan, in that it yielded the most varied and ravishing natural scenery and the most exhilarating quality of human joy. Had

the whole world of land and sea been in the clouds, it could not have appeared softer, lighter, or more at ease.

“Summer-time; the sea and the atmosphere was of a piece with the sky. The islands looked unreal, and the far inland hills were robbed of their claims by the restful worlds so near at hand. The sea seemed big to infinite proportions—never bare water, nor any prospect of bare and uninviting shores. The towns and villages stood out like holiday haunts for Arcadians, and there was no sign of human labour that looked anything less than refreshing exercise. I know that this was not altogether true; but such is the effect of rare natural beauty, we need no more than the soul awake to come by such sense of fortune as to make us indifferent to all efforts and pains mundane.”

The general features and delights of the Inland Sea were so pronounced that I improved in body and mind. Miajima was and is a sacred island. At one time no one might be born there, nor were any allowed to die there; but a declining faith and an increasing trade have abrogated these decrees or left them in abeyance. Nowadays one may go to Miajima to be born again, or, to be more explicit, to have some of one's senses changed or views altered. Just as fortune or misfortune gives our

thoughts a new direction, so may a visit to a compelling sanctuary or shrine.

Miajima is a beautifully wooded island, only a mile or so off the mainland. It has temples and torii—the peculiar Japanese arches which indicate the presence of sacred ground—pagoda-like houses and house-like pagodas to the tune of some scores; also the most bewitching little streets and bungalows perched high and low. I was pulled to the island in the twilight of a warm, heavy evening, so that I was thrilled and glowed and made faint by the sweet uncertainty of it all. After dinner, tired as I was, I went by boat out into the moonlit bay, and in a rude sort of gondola stole through the pine shadows by the shore and under the great torii, the waterway of the principal temple.

When I had searched the island for its native plants, I decided to go round it by water. I took a sampan with two rowers, elderly men, half nude and brown and tough as copper wire they were, and they rowed and rowed till I grew tired of the sho—lat—so, sho—lat—so, and stet—ter, stet—ter, for so they sighed, and hic-coughed, and sung by turns. A squall or two sprung up, and I was made restless and giddy; but calm returned.

About noon we pulled to an island shore, and there

ate lunch on a tiny floor of sand. Then up sail, and in two hours we were at home. It took seven hours to go round the island, and cost as many shillings.

My room at Temple Island reeked of moisture, and the bed gave off the odour of mouldy straw. This was not pleasant ; instead, it was a little disturbing. I had slept on so many hard floors, thin beds, not quite clean beds, mouldy beds, indefinite sorts of beds, and sometimes where were no beds at all, but not before in Japan on a wet bed or in a wet quarter. That is one advantage of the wood and paper houses of Japan—they are dry and airy, and do not hold enough in their walls or furnishings to attract and retain moisture. But this house was of plaster so mud-like, and placed over a stream, and under a bower of perpetually moist ever-green trees, that it had no chance to get dry. I know from experience that a dry bed gets warmer and warmer under the heat of the body, when a wet bed gets colder and colder. Such was this case. In the morning the bed was raw, clammy, cold ; so was I, except warm in such places where extra warmth should not be. But I was well, and bathing and rubbing with pure spirits of wine, which is an excellent thing to carry, as it serves for fuel, light, and embrocation, I was sound and secure for another day.

I dropped something on the gray-brown carpeting, and, stooping, I picked up a dainty, dull-gold hairpin. Ah ! change in the world's light. Who and where was she ? How I wondered and wandered ! A new task was set me. I had come to rest, but could I rest here ? The thing might never be missed, and it had but small value, but I would not give it up to the hotel people. My conscience did not nurse such a thought. Where was she, and what her mould ? Dainty, I vowed, the bauble was so neat ; we may judge women by such a thing. I tried to think whom I had passed with fair or dull-gold hair ; I could imagine no brown or black-haired beauty using such a pin. But why beauty at all ? Of course she was beautiful. Whoever imagined or dreamed of a woman who was not beautiful ? Set yourself to describe any one whom you view in a favourable light, and she is bound to become beautiful. So my lady of the gold hairpin.

Japan has but one high road. You begin in the middle and go south-west, or come in at the south-west and go towards the middle—always and of necessity by the same road. No, there is the rail and the water way, but this dainty lady would go by land ; the sea would not be so alluring—not the Inland Sea even. So away I went seeking. There was East and West. I

was going West ; was she ? And should I overtake her ? I had nothing better, nothing more restful to do than to imagine future stopping-places, and the form and complexion of ladies to be met with on the road. Should all my search prove vain, and this confession get into print, let this advertisement acquit me of any desire to retain possession of so useful and favoured a thing as a gold hairpin.

My life in the native inns was full of interest. In the first place, I was almost destitute of words, nor were many of my hosts and supporters better off. It means much that I fared so well. Never was there an intentional sign of indifference or impatience ; instead, the obvious desire to serve and befriend. To succeed in depicting the life of the inn would be enough to show the state and the quality of Japanese domestic life. Unfailing attention is given to one, whether of few needs or many.

The host or hostess is always in the vestibule, and on seeing a patron calls the maid to render complete service. Of this she never tires or will have done. In the morning one wakes to find her kneeling and bending over the chibashi, preparing it for making tea. This she dispenses with genuine smiles and salutations, and, plain or pretty, one does not wish her gone. She can

never leave without giving signs that she will be near, that you must ring or call or expect her for any want. If she says the breakfast will be at a particular hour, she appears with it to the minute, and she has never forgotten anything. The strangest feature of a Japanese inn is its privacy. In Europe the inn is of all houses the most public—in fact, we call it *The Public*; in Japan it is *The Private*.

Whatever one's status or demands, one is given a room alone; for, single or double, large or small, it is sacred to one, and to be used for all purposes. There is no dining-room, smoking-room, reading or writing room—not a chair or a square yard of space excepting the room one engages. At night the bed is brought in and rolled out, at morn it is rolled up and taken out, both performances having something of the charm of magic. A hundred people may be in the house, and one has no more sense of nearness to them than to those who pass up and down the street. Another feature—there is always perfect quiet. I stayed in many inns, to hear conversation once or twice only, and that very low and limited. It seemed to be the habit to sky any one who was thought to be a big gun. This is no misfortune, for at most the ascent is but two short flights of stairs, and these ensure more light, air, a

wider prospect, and some immunity from the stable-like odour which hangs about the lower chambers almost everywhere.

There is the greatest economy in building. As far as possible a hole or a sash lights, and in various ways aids, two rooms. The ceilings and beams across passages are often so low one has to stoop when moving about ; strips of white paper or tassels hang from passage beams and some doorways to remind one of the necessity. At inns no liquor is sold, and they are the most silent of all houses. Two brass hand basins at Nara were of the richest gold colour, and the handsomest things of their kind ; they shone like mirrors ; but for their weight and size, I certainly would have taken one in the hope of looking into it to life's end.

One morning at the general wash-tub were a man, his wife, and grown-up daughter. The man washed his teeth, mouth, and eyes only ; the wife bared her body to the waist, and gave herself a thorough soaping and rinsing ; the daughter bared to the shoulders only, and did not go within an inch of wetting her hair—though I do not suggest that she was not of cleanly habits.

The house was crowded with pilgrims—all very healthy, clean, strong men and women, a couple of



sizes larger than those to the north of Tokyo. It is noticeable that the people rise and fall in stature as they occupy elevated or low country. At an inn in Kobe we stood naked together, half a dozen men and women in the bathroom, others round about waiting. No one took the slightest notice of the other. Each man or woman watched for the chance to grab the bath and get a wash. It seems that they persist in the policy of not seeing; then it is no rudeness to take what they want. I heard of a Japanese bath-house keeper who was charged that he took no steps to prevent mixed bathing. He pleaded he had—by putting a bamboo stick across the bath.

At Nara my first meal was of five kinds of fish in five styles. A fillet of lobster, fried, the only thing I ate. Slices of pink and blue jelly-like, raw fish which made me shudder, and I had to cover it whilst I ate the lobster. Next a bright-eyed monster of the size of a herring. He, too, was raw, except for one awful burn just behind his ear. He was supposed to have been cooked, and it was evident that his indignation had caused all the blood in his body to run into his only visible eye. I said more or less audibly, "My little friend, don't turn up your tail and your sanguinary eye at me; this is not my doing; I would have saved you

from that ugly blister ; I did not want you to suffer so little or so much in my behalf. Go, seek some braver soul who will consume thee below stairs." Four was a good-looking fish, soused, but it was too fresh and too soft for sousing. Moreover, it languished in green gravy, like rancid cabbage water and as repellent of odour. Five was fish soup. This I could never endure, except it be dried cod with pimento, garlic, oil, and saffron. So all the dishes were banned except the fried lobster.

Now I had to see more than simple justice—a full measure of kindness—in what followed. The innkeeper kept a buffet at the railway station, and regularly, on finding I could not face the native fare, he sent a maid to bring three, four, and up to six plates of European food, or at least such things as he believed formed the staple of European fare. I was paying three yen (6s. 3d.) per day for a bed and three meals. I knew that he could afford to treat me well at this figure, but it is no business of innkeepers anywhere to lose money by their patrons.

Much as I love to trust Nature and feel at home in the open air, I share an equal delight in coming to a new and attractive inn. In fact, I am most human when a long journey has ended at some station or port,

and there is the task of finding a home. I make no plans, though sometimes I allow the most irresponsible people to choose an inn for me. I allowed the Japanese to send me hither and thither, and I had no cause to complain. They sent me to better and to worse than their own houses, but never to a bad one. To me a bad one would be a dirty one, or where nothing was clean enough to be endured. Back streets, and back rooms without back or any other windows, I did not fear, nor shades, nor shadows. If the passages were narrow, long, and mysterious, the rooms past finding out, and their occupants not known to be in, I did not mind. Things strange, things beyond my ken, I wished for in a land like Japan.

But there is one thing plain—Japan has no dark and awful parts to its individual houses or its cities—at least I found none. Tokyo, with two million odd inhabitants ; Osaka, an exaggerated type of Blackfriars and Blackwall, with over one million people ; Yokohama, Kyoto, and Kobe—all the big towns I went through, and lived in their poorest parts, to find nothing repellent. There were crowded populations working hard for life. Where there is not much wealth, there cannot be many rogues and vagabonds ; the public is too wise to tolerate them, and there is little worth stealing.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE GARDEN OF THE SENTEI.

I MADE a visit to Okayama to see what is claimed to be one of the three finest gardens in Japan, Korakooyen. The guidebooks and many advertisements proclaim this a triumph of the gardener's art ; as a matter of fact it reveals no art at all. In Kobe was a sign which satisfied me on this point. It ran (the name of the man in Japanese): "Florist *and* gardener." In Europe we call men gardeners who are plant growers ; as well call a brickmaker a builder or architect, or say a silkworm is a rare dressmaker, as call every man who handles a plant or a spade a gardener.

The garden of Okayama is not worth a mile walk in the best of weather unless one needs exercise. It is said to have been made towards the close of the eighteenth century, but part of it is of recent formation and it is poor. It is not an ordered or an artistic scheme ; it has no background or foreground, no middle distance, no motif or sense of proportion anywhere ; it was never

visualized and designed as a whole. A pond was made and a mound or two formed out of the excavated material, but nothing was seen in advance or placed true. There are a few rare trees trained, and some maples and azaleas, also iris, but these have nothing to do with the garden, for it is claimed to be rare landscape work. In fact, Okayama is hard up for sights, though it has a fine river and splendid prospects in the distant hills. It seems to be a legalized game in Japan to have something everywhere, if it is only a coal-mine, to show and applaud; always it is the famous, the celebrated, the magnificent, and not infrequently the notorious.

A tea-plant garden, a finely-placed castle, and some heavily-thatched and quaint houses come into view from all parts of this Korakooyen, and it is these things which arrest the eye and prevent the weak and ineffective efforts at gardening from fatiguing the visitor. The only things here worth notice are the islands and banks of pure sand and gravel, forming natural supports to the lake.

In dealing with Japanese gardens I am more concerned to explain them than to praise them, but one must begin by praising the garden of the Sentei. It is a lovely and an enchanting piece of work; the propor-

tion, the perspective, the tone, the restraint in planting, the wild freedom, all combine to yield perfection. This garden receives no help from surroundings ; it is self-contained, self-framed, complete. A stone bridge of hard, sharp lines is an intrusion, and works ruin wherever it comes into view. Excepting a few iris and plants of similar effect, this garden is composed of trees and shrubs, stones and water. All the effect and all the compelling charm are due to form and tone. But for the bridge, there are no mechanical lines nor any colour apart from such as belong naturally to the place and the season.

The ground plan of this garden is not good, since the large proportion of water surface cuts the land into strips of nearly equal size on its two main sides ; but the treatment of the land is in the best Japanese manner. The soil and rock masses have been carved out rather than dug out and heaped up ; one detects the work of genius in this land moulding and modelling, and at the same time discerns the perfection of Nature, composed, at ease.

To traverse the garden, one makes an up-and-down climb round the lake, which is in reality about five hundred feet long, and resembles a reach of still water within a more or less rock-bound gorge, at one end

suggesting dark, dank woodlands, at the other open, high country and its weather-beaten vegetation.

The actual area of this garden is less than twelve acres, but from many view-points one may stand convinced that the eye is filled and fascinated with objects ranging over several miles. But this garden has something much better than mere illusion. The treatment of its woodland areas and their paths is a thing worth noticing.

The Japanese have a supreme sense of natural fitness and effect of things. They do not attempt to make grass grow in impossible places ; in fact, they do not like or employ grass except in rare positions of decidedly limited areas. Everywhere they love the earth, and aim to reveal expression in the almost bare face of the earth. Hence they do not stuff up and hedge off the spaces under trees, but keep them open, visible, and bare. No, not bare ; they are no more bare than the face of the rarest statue or cathedral is bare. The story of the local earth and the story of all the local trees are plain for all to see as they wander within the shades of the garden of the Sentei. The wonderfully moulded floor is kept free of leaves and weedy growth, and covered with an enchanted carpet of rare mosses and lichens. Here is a hint to Europeans who would make full use

of shady spaces ; but it must not be forgotten that fine effects are not possible the year round if heavy-foliaged, deciduous trees or large shrubs predominate.

The other rare feature in this wood garden is the treatment of such tree roots as grow about paths. It is evident that some trees were planted with the express object of their yielding study and effect as they grew of themselves or were trained in various directions. This tree-root study is one which Europe needs to take up with some quiet enthusiasm, and until it does it will know little of the story and beauty of trees, or how to deal with them. In the Sentei garden the soil had been excavated from some tree roots ; others had been buckled, crossed, and interlaced, and there was not a step of the many shady or dimly-lighted ways which did not reveal Man and Nature striving together and yielding splendid and storied scenes.

The Sentei garden is at Hiroshima, in Southern Japan ; it is said to have been formed upwards of two hundred years ago, and the condition of the trees supports this. The design and planting is attributed to a Japanese noble of the name of Sentei ; be this as it may, the garden is of rare and absorbing interest. It is not showy enough, nor busy enough, to appeal to the conventional European gardener ; but the student who



searches Japan in the interests of the gardener's art will find no surer or more informing piece of work than that at Hiroshima.

Something may be learned from Japan and put to use in such old courts, recesses, and parts of our house surroundings as for various reasons may not be covered with soil or carry heavy vegetation. The Japanese method is particularly suitable to any damp, dark, or confined spaces where it is undesirable to increase the moisture and the gloom. The first garden of this type to impress me was in the north-east of Japan ; although in latitude 37, the winters are severe, bitter weather prevailing till the middle of May.

I mention this incidence of climate, because it is clear that we may in any part of the British Isles produce court and yard gardens with as much ease and certainty of effect as is done in Northern Japan. Neither shade, dankness, nor city grime prevents the formation and preservation of true and refreshing scenes within confined domestic spaces. The materials are assured to us, only the art needs to be acquired, and I do not think this difficult ; in fact, I venture the opinion, that given the idea and something like a rough plan, the British gardener can produce effects of considerable charm and lasting value. Architecture is involved, and

anything like Japanese treatment of spaces abutting on to fine buildings of the classical or pure Gothic orders would not be right. There remain an incalculable number of houses of a nondescript character, and spaces innumerable about quite small houses in town, suburb, and country, where such work might be carried out.

The Japanese do not object to a dry, arid, or starved effect in their garden scenes ; in fact, they create such effects of set purpose. It shows a peculiar twist in their natures, that with all their love of and persistent use of water in their farming and kitchen gardening, they make their gardens hard, dry, and hot in expression and in fact ; and, allowing for the climate and the general conditions of life, this semi-desert system of gardening is a gain to them : though, as I have explained before, it is chiefly due to the admiration of Nature at strife and afraid, and the desire to perpetuate large scenes and objects on a small scale.

In Japan the aim is ever to impart a dry, warm effect to enclosed courts or shady spaces. To this end they provide a hard floor of tamped earth, or such a mixture of soil and stones as will absorb little moisture. Whatever the floor material, it is moulded or modelled to look natural, attractive, and much larger than if left flat and formless. The rough surface of a

Japanese court garden may be gauged by saying that the rock masses around the ponds of our Zoos and the little hills and sandy plains provided for our alpine animals when kept in captivity are good models for study when it is desired to emulate the Japanese. Further, one should observe geological formations, and distribute, or mass rocks, as they stand in a state of nature.

In courts or small enclosures where the floor space must be frequently used, the Japanese arrange flat pebbles on their edges ; but more often they arrange a floor of stepping-stones, shingle, and sand, or cover the spaces between the flat stones with mosses and other low but perpetual and attractive vegetation. Whatever the design and the foundation materials, they are always compacted so hard as positively to prevent anything like vigorous growth of the plants chosen. One may say that a Japanese garden of this class is grown to full size on the day it is made ; it is no more expected to increase its bulk or alter its form than is a piece of statuary, a house, or a painting. It is made to express some scene or scenes which are good of themselves and good to look upon, and the amount of soil provided decides the degree of vigour and extent of growth in root and blade or branch.

As the Japanese employ rocks with such striking

effect, I must return to another word or two on them. The Japanese do not build such things as we term rockeries or grottoes ; they do not think of sites for plants, but of sites for rocks or portions of cliff scenery. The best rock work of the Japanese appears to rise above sea, or other agitated water. Even where they rise out of the earth and appear to defy removal, they usually suggest water as the surrounding and formative agent. Every rock appears to be broad-based and linked with an incalculable solid mass. This is in fine contrast with our perched-up, threatening, and tottering affairs, which could neither have been pushed up nor fallen down to such positions where we are asked to admire them. The smallest stone in Japanese garden work, virtually all above the surface, appears as an out-crop of a mighty giant spreading under a broad but thin mantle of earth. The scheme always represents much agitated and struggling vegetation, making the most of a few pockets and strips of soil scattered over a mass of picturesquely moulded or wild and rugged rocks.

Of course this class of work demands the highest sense of seeing and handling the raw material of Nature. Moreover, it demands a knowledge of perspective, a capacity for foreshortening and scaling objects, which

is rare to any people except the Japanese. In the most ordinary Japanese court garden work, one seems to be able to estimate the natural causes of everything in sight, or suggested beneath the surface. Of course there are no natural causes, the whole scheme and substance is artificially formed, but the maker has always hidden himself under the lively mask of Nature, and the scene or series of scenes stands true and satisfying. So one may say, that when Japanese work is good, it is Art and Nature too, and more restful and supporting than anything we do with similar space and material.

In the small yard and court spaces, trees, various shrubs, sedges, rushes, reeds, and grasses are employed, also the iris and many other small plants, and all are forced to struggle for existence. The Japanese will have no prodigal nature or rampant growth in their small gardens ; they tear out the strong spring shoots of shrubs to make desperate wounds and signs of pain ; they pull up or bare some of the roots ; they bruise and peel bark, and bend and distort over-ambitious boughs ; they replace deep soil with gravel or sand ; everything must show fight and a will to triumph against natural forces, as wind or cold blasts, a desert portion of soil and moisture, or the mean remains of some landslide or robbing flood.

We cannot garden in the Japanese manner until convinced of the value of restraint. We crowd the surface with incongruous things ; we leave no space, since we seem incapable of discerning the necessity of practically bare space ; nor do we typify place or country. We plant everything upright, and if it would lean we stake and tie it and prop and prune it upright, and we say we make landscapes ! As a matter of fact, our most worthy landscape effects are a long way from Nature, and not infrequently as far removed from good Art. But I write this only to emphasize my desire to see European gardeners, or would-be gardeners, take to the study of Japanese garden work, as it is distinctive and valuable beyond their ordinary conception.

Japan is my greatest discovery. If Europe is the home of my heart and reveals the art of life as lived out of religious faith and historic tradition, then is Japan the other, the earlier, deeper, more natural part of me. The Japanese garden is not a diversion, an abortion, or anything uncertain ; instead, the Japanese, of all men, see and deal with the most informing, companionable, and supporting things ; their world is all alive ; it is the life of the mind too, though not the ordinary civilized mind. Man has come to be the disposing factor in Nature. The chief value of Japanese garden work

is that it voices and reveals so much of Nature. The Japanese are the interpreters of Nature's ways.

All Japanese garden plants tell their story, and it is ever a good one. No European garden plant tells any story—it never was or can be true to Nature ; but look on a Japanese plant or landscape of any sort anywhere, and what a world ! How their hand-made landscapes swing and sway ; how their trees put out hands and feet to catch for life, and retain their hold against the landslide and the storm ; how they squirm, and thread, and seek amid clefts and crannies, or fight the blasts of hail and snow, as it strives to enfold them with its robes of white. We have not observed to follow and win support from Nature ; we have not brought Nature into our gardens, but done our best to keep her out. Not device, not pattern, but Design we want ; not how much we can invent, but how much we may show by a few lines. Nature's lines are few. The land pictures are models of restraint : a fold and twist and curve in the native land, no more. A garden is not to be a fancy, but a fact ; not one man's art, but every man's home. A good thing does not tire or disturb, but puts and keeps one to rest. Ambitious gardening must prove a vanity and a source of misery.

We should perceive so surely as to build gardens

to round off natural scenery. Watching a lake recede, and reveal expressive beauties in the disposal of more or less submerged material of many kinds, made me conscious that we study and achieve nothing at all of strands and forelands, of lakes, pools, the water and land masses forming our landscapes. The Japanese alone have insight for and achieve wonders in this field. They watch and wait to discern the significance and the purpose of the seasons. They live by revealing Nature's Despair. To fear the raw elements and compete with them is to be fascinated and gladdened to no noisy or complaining end. The forelands and islands and shores of a miniature lake ; the lilt and swell of the old trees ; the upstart saplings, advancing their adventurous heads above the hills and by the water side ; the tired and slumbering land—these things satisfy.

Japan is a weight almost. It betters Greece in the demands it makes on one's understanding. From morning till night one is filled with lines, lines, lines. The eye sees them, the ear hears them, as if they meant varying rates of speed, and in their haste or repose give off shrill or languorous music.

In moulding surfaces the Japanese alone have done perfect work ; in Europe one may see no perfect garden which man has made ; he has neither designed nor



copied Nature to perfection. What do I want or see possible over and above what has been done? Greater perfection in form. There is insufficient form in a series of lines and curves which show flat, and chiefly are flat. In Nature nothing is flat, and there is small Art and less Nature in any garden which is or appears flat. Natural scenes and their sections are round; beauty is round. Nature seldom repeats, and repetition is the rawkish feature in gardens. If a thing is good, it is enough.

To the cultivated sense a European garden imposes a sort of fatigue drill. Only in Japan may one see the tired land put to rest. Make no mistake: the earth is tired, and by man made tiresome. Our gardens appear awake and alarming, where they are intended to yield repose and peace. We have not come to think, much less talk of active and passive scenes; we have not studied and summed up the material for a scene and season; our grouping is no art, nor does it at all resemble Nature. This mere pattern prevents our seeing the shapes in the land, the story of the land, the mystery of the land which counts and accounts for all.

I have given hours to seeing and forming the surface of a small piece of land; a little more or less, here or there; more roundness to every part, more dis-

tinctiveness, twist, roll, wind and rest in each part. Nature stamps her foot at times. The land does not heave and subside, nor the cataract fall without a complaining or a roar. Not "taste" but vigour, not death but sleep, that is what we want to see over the face of the land. The geologist should be a good gardener, since he may know the forms which Nature assumes under different influences, force or forces making all these things possible in combination; also the means to see them when clothed with vegetation, and over all the lengthy future which man conceits himself must surely be.

To prove the art and to crown it, if there is any need for crown after knowing what is right and done aright, the handiwork must not be seen. Any hint of invention, any display, any mechanics known as "taste," want annihilating. The best in Nature is equal to any man's needs, and if he cannot see shapes and forms, if he cannot lift a scene wholly or in good part and place it by his own hands within his garden space, then he is no gardener, and there is no need to trouble at all about him. The world over, people wonder how and what it is others see; certain it is that we see differently, and we have different powers of shaping and grouping things. I cannot draw, but I can design; I cannot paint or

arrange flowers, but I can mark out the colour scheme for a picture ; I cannot plant my land with the same sureness as I can mould it ; I am a land-builder, sculptor, carver, moulder—that is all.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LITTLE WOMEN.

THE tubbing and scrubbing of which one hears so much affords nothing different to our way of taking a bath, excepting that often it is a tub instead of an iron or stone bath, square instead of long, deep instead of shallow. Some bathrooms in quite small houses are most elegant, and rare comfort shops too. The maids do bath or wish to bath one. They help to undress one, and always they would hold the clothes and towel, but they are all as little mothers, and one forgets to be shy or to regard them as women. They are and they are not ; for one sees so much of them as to lose sight of them as women. There is not a stocking in Japan, and inferentially there is not a leg one may not see. As I heard say, clothes are responsible for much of the immorality of this world. It is certain that the Japanese garments do not help to make the wearers seductive ; there is no charm in the Japanese figure. In fact, she has no figure—a figure of fun, if you like, but no other

The Japanese shuffle is imposed by the wooden patten. This is not as long as the foot of the wearer, and to keep the thing on and the white sock out of the dirt, the nation must shuffle and trudge on tiptoe. It is noticeable that those who wear sandals or straps about their feet affect a walk, and there is no difference in the gait of men and women. The Japanese leg is interesting—a leg peculiar and the property of both sexes. Japan has the leg-worshipping cult, but I doubt if they have made it the leg it is. Perhaps it developed from going on tiptoe. Anyway, there it is, the strongest, most muscular leg one may see, though not attractive, for it is always a beefy red and has neither ankle nor spring to it.

I saw hundreds of young girls assembled, visitors to shrines and other places of interest, and never a truly graceful and well-formed body: and the dress allows an inspection. The legs are too thick, the hips narrow, and the shoulders much cramped and rounded. On the whole, the men have far better figures and finer features than the women. The wearing of the *tabi* (linen sock) divides the big toe from the others, and the toes turn inwards, as do the knees, induced from desire to keep the kimono folded across the legs whilst moving along. There are few beautiful hands; the nails

are narrow, ribbed, and claw-like. But the great want is the eye and the mouth. Now and then the eye is open, clear, and engaging, but I do not recall a mouth I wanted to kiss. In the North all the peasant wives blacken their teeth, and in other regions the teeth are most defective or unattractive ; on the other hand, some Japanese have lovely teeth.

The female voices are most agreeable, so soft and musical, and very kind. I encountered peasant slave women who might have been excused if they had howled like wolves or brayed like she-asses, but they did neither ; instead, they spoke only of necessity and with dignified calm. As I have used the word "dignified," I will again say that Japanese speech is the most dignified of their possessions. I saw reserve, restraint, respect, in all times and places, but nothing of the character of true dignity excepting in the choice of tones and manner of speech. The sweetest voices I heard were from four or five girls who sat in a group at the Yoshiwara in Yokohama.

It is not easy to come by the sense of humour of a remote people. I thought the Japanese very quick in some things, very dull in others. Their ear is decidedly dull, and I doubt if they can visualize from descriptions as readily as the ordinary European. They have seen so little, read so little, exercised their minds upon so

little. Every nation in Europe is informed of, and more or less impressed by, the rest of Europe. One cannot say that Japan is a blend of the leading human elements of Asia.

But I was about to write that to get the best of a Japanese girl, one must see and hear her laugh. She can do so with smaller excuse or show of reason than any mortal I have ever met or am likely to meet. When she likes anything, she laughs ; when she doesn't understand any thing or body, she laughs—and there is some wisdom in that ; when anything tickles her fancy, she laughs, and runs round and kneels down and sways, and lifts her queer little head, and giggles and laughs again ; when she has rendered gracious service, she laughs ; and when she is praised or favoured, she laughs and laughs and laughs. There is very little noise. She puffs out the most infectious of giggles and hiccups, as if she blew her pleasure through a sheet of tissue paper in the sides of her mouth. One of my little slaves was such an artist in laughing that I took special means of bribing her to stay and entertain me.

At Nara the weather was awful. Rain fell in torrents day after day, and I passed most of my time watching the womenkind at their domestic employments, which are less varied than those of their European sisters. They

do not iron clothes, but pull them and stroke them, chuckle over them, perhaps swear at them ; anyhow, they always damp them and take no thought of drying them, and that was liable to make me swear. When a piece of stuff is to be extra free from creases, stiff and gingham like, they spread it sopping wet over a board and lean it against the house or street wall to dry, and look like, what it is not, new stuff. With so much resource in some things, one sees them thriftless in others. Why they should go to all the labour of sewing the sheets to the quilts I could not make out. Chinese buttons or tapes would answer just as well, look better, not take one-hundredth part of the time, nor as much material.

Their neatness and artistic sense of grouping ordinary things, such as table ornaments and kitchen ware, passes all European conception. Their courage is of the wild, ungovernable order, and where their arrangements are disturbed, they behave as little furies. At Kyoto I felt compelled to be careless : it was such a rare pleasure to see my Kio San defy and reprove me. Neat trays or low baskets are provided for one's few garments, and it is only a savage who does not fold his clothes, place them on the tray, and breathe a prayer of thankfulness that he has got rid of the hideous things, and then either



push them off the premises, which means the open-air verandah, or leave them to be removed by Something San. But this was too ordinary a process ; I threw my garments on the floor, because it evoked amusement to do so. Kio San waited for nothing but the chance of catching me in the act, and she did almost every day. And this is how she dealt with me.

First she let me know that she thought me very dirty and very stupid ; it was abominable to place polluted garments on the honourable floor of the honourable house of the honourable street of the most honourable town. Then I was stupid not to remember and do as I had been shown. Kio would fly at me and push me in the chest—quite hard and viciously she pushed ; then she flew for the clothes tray and one by one my garments ; piling them, she knelt over them, then clapped her hands, and said with all her heart, “ JA-A-PAN—this is the way.” Then she’d fold a garment, bang it hard with both hands, appear to abuse it for a silly sort of garment, and rustling her breath, she’d clap it in the tray and bang it again, and again ejaculate, “ JA-A-PAN.” She would have me know the custom and decency of her country. When all the things were folded, she’d console herself for restoring order, look at me, plead with me, snarl at me, and threaten me ; then she’d

bound up and bolt through any side of the room that chanced to be open.

It is hard to make anything of this small adventure, but it was delightful to experience. On leaving, I offered Kio San a yen. Wildly she embraced it and me, and the opportunity to come along! At her own expense she took a rickshaw to the station, where she watched and guarded me like a mother till I was safe in the train. Her devotion was complete. The last I saw of her, she was perched in her pattens above the mud of the station yard, and making desperate signs of affection and farewell.

Westerners complain that the Japanese woman is downtrodden; rather I would say she is in great part neglected. It is true she may be sold to prostitution or service of any form; but as a daughter, wife, or free domestic she does not lag far behind the boys and men. Men nurse babies equally with women; also there is not a domestic duty men will not perform. The women wear more expensive clothing than the men. Footgear is alike for both, and as neither sex affects jewellery, vanity is divided between the two. The schools and the subjects are much the same for both. One may notice that men are indifferent to the presence of or comfort of women; but if this

were not apparent in Eastern Asia, where might it be expected ?

All the house and other litter is tied in mats or straw crates, and carried away to the land on women's backs. In the North a U-shaped pad is worn on the back. The Little Women have this as a part of their dress, and they are always ready for labour. One does not see any men to match these women : they live and move as an unsexed and distinct class ; married or single, whom they keep, or who keeps and employs them, I did not discover. It is significant that one can buy no pictures of Japanese peasants or native life of a rude kind. The Japanese issue postcards and prints of every detail in the life of their subject people, the Koreans, and they lay stress on the rudeness of such employments and features as are equally common in Japan.

Round Kamakura were some exceedingly pretty villages, thatched roofs, topiary hedges, and the quaintest of trees and gardens. In a paddy field a man and a woman were working together. He was hoeing down ridges of rice stubble which showed above the water, and she with an enormous basket of green grass—it must have weighed a hundredweight or more—walked or waded up and down, treading the soil into pulp to prepare it for rice ; the burden was to help her to sink in to the thigh.

Japan must think more of her women. There is the field and the factory, and the advantage is here one and there the other. We all think we know what is best for ourselves, yet a little more light and we come by a deal more life. Until the women are relieved of their slavery of the fields, are recognized of finer clay, and allowed to become true mothers and inspirers of the race, Japan cannot improve in ways worthy the name of advancement. Put the Little Women in white linen, keep them to employments where they can wear a stocking and cultivate some pride in an ankle. A land without many bright, happy women is Tom Fool's land; and in spite of all the prattle about the Geisha and the Mousme, there is no rare female loveliness, as the maid goes, in Japan.

It is interesting to watch them dispose their belongings and themselves when they travel by train: how they spread the rug, always sitting on it, and never covering themselves with it. In fact, it is a general habit to take off garments, not to put on more, nor wrap up as we do. When they can neither sit, nor crouch, nor perch any longer, they kneel as if in prayer against the side of the carriage or over a basket or bag, and there they sleep silently, motionless for hours, like little faultlessly-dressed idols, and just as expressionless

and still. They never hesitate to perform their toilet to the extent of touching up their face and hair. The comb that sits astride the centre ridge or roll is no ornament merely. Twenty times a day it is lifted out of its seat, made to catch back any wandering wave or wayward single hair, and then reseated on its proud throne.

I left Kobe on a soft, murky morning. Mena San and I had been smiling familiarly at each other over the last couple of days, and the hour before leaving, as I gave her a yen, she tucked it away between the folds of her *obi*, and, putting her hands in a beseeching pose on her knees, said, "Take me to Okayama—Mijama—and on—and on!" Now, all I heard of this was the place names; the "take me" and the "on and on" were understood by signs and smiles and raising of hands, as we do when we picture places overseas or beyond the mountains. To convince her speedily, I pressed my hands together as if describing something very small between them, and said, "Ginko" (Bank). She understood, and smiled wearily.

It must not be accounted strange that all my wandering affections are spent on serving-maids. They are the only mortals whom I meet at close quarters, and in Japan one depends on them for everything. They

do in the most complete manner take charge of one. It is their business and their pleasure to do so, and it makes a big difference in one's estimate of them that they do count it a pleasure, and make no sign of its being a labour or duty.

At times, through the eye of memory, I see heavenly blessings in the faces of women and girls who have watched my departure from inns and farms and cottage doors. Ay, and from slum passages and reeking, dark-some alleys too. The human soul is ubiquitous, and were it not so, few could travel far. In truth, there is no travel worth the adventure if it does not improve the quality of our human sympathies.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### SCENES IN SOUTHERN JAPAN.

**I**N soft, warm air, with surging mists and no direct view of the sun, I left Yokohama for Kyoto. My toads were a source of wonder and expense, for they were refused admission to the train until I had paid forty sen (1s. 8d.); then they were given two enormous labels, broader than their box, and a compartment to themselves. To travel with a baby or any other living thing is to have company and trouble in plenty.

I have heard that a prize is on offer to any one who can write of Japan and not mention Fuji. No wonder ! When one has seen Fuji one has such wealth of pleasure as to be independent, so I will write a sentence or two of the peerless mountain. First of all, it is the largest perfect thing one may see ; it is wonderfully symmetrical, but not stiff or hard ; nor is it cold or awe-inspiring—rather a glowing, a deified, and truly uplifting thing. One thrills, puts out hands, and exclaims aloud of the beauty, power, and glory of it all. I have seen Fuji

named Great White Spirit ; it is that indeed. Fuji cannot be painted or described ; it cannot be over-drawn, because it cannot be reached by human eyes or pen or tongue. Here one sees in the Japanese way one thing only—and enough.

Standing at sea level, Fuji, fifty-five miles away, rises to afford a sort of throne and crown of the world. It is over twelve thousand feet high, and it may be seen to its full height in its entirety from many view-points. The mass is so great, so accessible to the eye, and the lines so soft, that the beholder is charmed, and made to desire the support of this great, pure mountain. Had Fuji been in Europe, it would have inspired an exalted and enduring form of faith, for it is of holy and benign aspect, and an unfailing source of gladness and hope to all mortals.

To the Japanese, Fuji is both Goddess and Sacred Mountain ; but it has not enlivened or inspired Japan as it would have inspired Europe or Western Asia, and one searches one's European mind for a fitting interpretation of the purpose and facial expression of Fuji. The isolated aloofness of the mountain, its unsullied form, its proud disdain of all the world around, show it as fresh as if it had just risen out of the purest sea, or descended as a cloud out of holiest light. Fuji is



to be seen and felt at a distance. It is not so much material, snow-capped, and solitary : it is a living spirit and it expresses the sense of form that fills the eye, and the quality which makes all the soul discernible in the Japanese.

Fuji rises out of a comparatively low tableland, and one may ramble round its base to see a world of loveliness, several large lakes, streams hastening and lingering, villages, tea plantations, paddy fields and their peasants, idle children, and many glimpses of shining bays and broad plains of the sea.

Moving south, summer came with a bound. There were thousands and thousands of little plots ready for the sickle ; many crops of barley were laid, and some were bound. The country came to resemble parts of England, the paddy fields and the scanty garbs of the peasants alone making marked difference. It would be impossible to find cleaner cultivation—no sign of a weed or a wilding among the crops. As in the North, these are all set in open rows, with spaces between prepared to receive other crops when the grain shall be cut and taken home. The growth and ripening is very rapid, and summer's gold succeeds to the deep, luscious green of spring all in a day or so.

Some peasants take the wheat and barley with a

sort of comb, a bar of wood fretted, which they whip under the ears and pull them off into a bag carried at the side. The sickle of Japan is of the smallest and rudest kind—a piece of hoop iron, cut to the shape of a short flaying knife, with a heft lashed on to a piece of wood about eighteen inches long.

Men and women bear the harvest loads on poles and bars in the same way, right across two continents, from Japan to Portugal. In some parts of Southern Japan the sheaves were hung on clothes-lines to dry—only the lines happen to be rods of bamboo placed on upright poles ; also corn and straw are put to dry on roofs, verandahs, smooth rocks—anything above the wet earth—and there it dries in the first wind or hour of sunshine.

No hay or other fodder is grown, as there are not enough animals to consume it, though everywhere green stuff is cut and carried on to the land as manure. June is the harvest month. Grain, if dry, is beaten out directly after harvesting. Some beat the small sheaves (mere handfuls) over a bar or on a table, others use mallets to the loose ears and grain in the straw laid on a raised earth floor, as in the Mediterranean region. The flail is used in a variety of forms, also grain is fretted out by pulling it across a sort of comb fixed on a frame.

Holding the grain and chaff against the wind to winnow is the most picturesque feature of harvest time, as the winnower stands on a tub or stone and holds the sieve far out to provide a truly classic pose. The harvesters can never be clean or look it, for the grain is cut when the furrows between are a slush.

The three hundred and twenty-six miles between Yokohama and Kyoto revealed rich and beautiful country over all the way—all the low and flat country populated, so that there was never a vacant or unpeopled scene. The picture was that of a continuous village, the biggest towns appearing no more important than the smallest. Tokyo, with over two millions, has been described as a big village; it is that truly. No town of Japan has the features of a European city; an agglomeration of tiny matchwood houses does not make a city. Japan never came to know aught of stateliness. The villages never get above the plains and mud flats; that is the worst feature of all. A prettier, grander, easier land does not exist in similar latitude, yet all the best goes unused, untenanted. The rare and unimportant exceptions are where a few thermal establishments, shrines, or pleasure resorts occupy sites among the hills. Thatch and black tiles make all the roofings, and from end to end there is no appreciable difference in archi-

ture and general plan of houses, villages, temples, shrines, and towns.

There is room for every kind of fruit grown in Europe. Grapes as food, if not for wine, should be given a large place in Japanese rural economy. Consider—and it is a hard fact to consider and grasp all it means—that tens of thousands of square miles, the whole empire of Japan, all the cultivated land by which it lives, is turned over two, three, or four times annually by direct hand labour. I examined the land and the industries of the land over one region of three hundred and fifty miles, and though the land was cultivated, it did not show twenty horses or other animals. Once I journeyed over two hundred miles to discover but one animal—a horse.

Try a smaller task. Try to estimate the hand labour involved in working one hundred square miles. Now in many parts of Japan one may sit or stand and overlook a piece of land twenty miles long by five miles wide—that is, one hundred square miles—and on this area there may be from five thousand to twenty thousand people working year in and year out, always toiling, thinking of toil, and toiling anew—never any escape from, or belief in any need or gain in escape from, this toil of hand.

The human horses of Kyoto are impressive ; they are so strong, and their strength so unnecessary, one can find no reasonable excuse for them. Japan stands still till she employs Power, and makes power out of animal life other than human. The men pull loads up to twelve hundredweight ; one man will pull this load on a long, two-wheeled cart or truck, the framework of which resembles a ladder, the load ranged in single file between the rungs. It is usual for the load to be at the ends, more behind than in front of the axle line. One is tempted to gauge the state of life at Kyoto by these loads and the men who draw them. They show what Japan has to emerge from before she can be anything like Europe.

The bulls and horses which draw carts in Kyoto pull their loads by a single trace or centre rope running along their back, and they are driven from a single rein fastened to a ring in the nose ; this rein is flicked from one side of the head to the other, and pulled to control the direction. Many of the draught animals of the field have neither collar, neck-yoke, nor chest-band, but pull from a girth strap, the pressure coming about equally all round their bodies.

The Japanese arrange their scarecrows sitting down. Made of straw and stones and clods, a hat and straw

coat, they look lifelike and quite inscrutable leaning against the heap of weeds or stones on a bank of the field, like a man taking a rest or a meal.

Throughout the low country of the South the vegetation changes little in kind or size: a few things fall out, and a few things come in; the most notable and abundant are climbing roses and a shrub with white flowers like *deutzia*, but of coarser foliage that was new to me. I had to wander over more than two thousand miles to see my first piece of hill-farming, Italian in character, about twenty miles south-west of Okayama. At Nara I saw some hillmen who came from the mountains of Sando; they were the largest and most robust men I saw in all Japan.

Many Japanese rivers run at higher levels than the surrounding country, due to artificial banking, and enormous lengths of massive levees have been made to prevent flooding of the cultivated land. The Japanese plait long cylinders of bamboo, and fill them with big stones, and thus make excellent binders for banks and barriers across or beside rapid streams. One sees immense levees formed in this way.

To the west of Kobe were fine plains and vales filled with wheat, barley, and other crops, and a cow or two. A very rich and extensive plain lies south-west of Oka-

yama, thirty miles by five or six, given to wheat mostly. Bullocks were fattening, and some were used for ploughing. Ripe peaches grown in the open were on sale on the thirteenth of June. Every bit of tree fruit was tied in paper bags or sown up in muslin. One finds no bad or neutral country at low levels; most of it has a natural richness and is well cultivated, except that it might be put to better uses.

The interminable array of silent, slumbering hills offers a sort of consolation to all the toilers in the vales. Nature and Man—Nature and Man—get into one's ear and into one's eye, until one comes to feel and see some of the sources of Japanese life and ideals. It may not be possible to describe the effect of the thousands of little fields and strips and plots and dots of grain and green, as they spread and perch and wrestle for their places among the recesses of the lower hills; and the sizes and forms and expressions of these hills are as varied as they are numberless; yet one feature links and relates them all—they have black caps of vegetation, and they suggest conical or dome-shaped mushrooms.

The dry, ribbed hills of the Japanese painters, with their black blobs and tackabout lines of shade, as if pricked in with the end of a stub brush, are the rare

and idealized features of Japan. They are due to the presence of sandstone and volcanic formations followed by landslides, rapid erosion, and the steady action of water. These materials and forces are by no means limited to Japan ; but the Japanese alone have searched to discover their true artistic value. In Northern Japan the best example of pine and storm and trembling land is in that dreamlike region of Shiogama and Matsushima. Less effective examples are found at Enoshima, and at intervals down the coast till the Inland Sea is reached.

Many islands of this sea hold all the best features in miniature, except that the struggle is less keen, and vegetation does not strive and complain, nor achieve so much in the form and expression of splendid courage. Round Hiroshima one may view the scenes which are the sources of some of the best of Japanese landscape painting ; but the rarest and the grandest natural features of this class lie a little inland between Miajima and Shimonoseki. One spot, Heta, is that which painters use for their steep black hills, with here and there a landslide or a gorge and fall. Deep, dark, chilly vales, with a threat of storm and utter loneliness, it looks like what timid folk call a Judgment-day place. On the day I was there the storm came in real earnest,



and provided a succession of imposing and thrilling scenes.

The land between Nara and Osaka was truly lovely in every feature, purest white lilies decking the ground under pine woods which spread for miles and miles. The general appearance is similar to the country between Spezia and Genoa, excepting stately buildings; for there is nothing strong, old, or anything to convince that life had been a splendid thing in what we term the Night of Time. But Japan keeps us near to Europe, for its landscape is often like the European. At Kasaoka I saw a lovely picture. A Misty Morn were all the words I heard as I looked on a lakelike inroad of the sea, with high black peaks and rounded promontories towering out of silver bars of mist. A white heat was over all, and there was no sun visible. Direct sunlight is infrequent in Japan; in summer so much moisture provides a bar between earth and sky; the light is soft, and the space tones gray and sombre. One reads the legend of a region, turns to history, interrogates the people, consults oneself, and discovers Nature—Nature! that vague, elusive, silent, unsatisfying, and final term.

“Lake Hirosawa is the place for viewing the moonbeams on autumn nights.” So said the native guide-book, but I did not go. Those moonbeams and those

autumn nights ! It was not autumn, but bursting June ; if any more, it rained and rained and rained ; and I never saw a country look wetter than Japan when it is not raining ; and when it does, why, there's nothing left but water and to swim like a duck.

Unable to converse, I came by no great body of Japanese humour, though there was usually something to divert and employ one. At an outlandish place, when I asked if many Europeans came, the hostess replied, " Half-past ten "—meanin about five gin five years. A Japanese boy, pointing to a slaughter-house, said it was " A cow-cut house." A shop sign read : " Fresh milk pulled from the cow by Hygienics." Another sign in Kobe was more explicit ; it ran : " Please enter and inspect us all over." In the same town, near a wharf, was a walled enclosure and a board holding this notice : " The Notice is strictly forbidden to get over this stone wall."

Without any effort of my own, news of my prospective arrival in Kobe had been sent in advance to a native innkeeper. When I stepped from the train a swarthy little man sprang at me and held me with both hands, and cawed and sputtered his hopes and fears concerning the capture. He was quite tiny, but remarkably strong, as all his race are, and he appeared to hiss and hurl

curses at the hotel touts, lest they should wheedle or pull me from him.

At the foot of a beautifully-moulded and richly-wooded hill I stumbled on this notice : " A clean and pleasant Tea-shed at the rear of Venus Hill." This was tempting, so I climbed flight after flight of rough and tiring steps till I reached the Tea-shed. Without doubt it was clean and pleasant, only Venus was out.

In Japan it is almost impossible to escape seeing gravestones ; they bestrew and affect all the country land put to use, and many promontories, islands, and the sides of ravines are overlaid with stones or carvings or roughly-hewn tombs. In some quarters there are more signs of death and past generations than of the living and their activities. The peasantry are always working in sight of the graves and memorials of their dead. A rocky outcrop, a few trees, or the need of a screen or rubbish heap cause a mound to stand up here and there among the paddy fields, and this mound is sure to be used as a burying-ground. Often they provide delicate and distinctive charm to the cultivated vales, for a tree or two, a stone lantern, and few or many small conical stones, placed on broader flat stones so that they resemble beehives, make storied and companionable spots above the mire. On these mounds

the peasants retire for their meals, and at one and the same time support themselves by contemplating the condition of their ancestors.

During an afternoon walk outside Kobe I found my way into a cemetery so small, old, tree-shaded, and quiet that it might more truly be described as a church-yard. At the gate were several sheds and vendors of green stuff, tied in bundles, flowers, and things associated with the dead. Two women preceded me by a little, and I thought they were smoking; but on their halting by a pile of stones I found that each carried a bundle of sandalwood, which they had bought and lighted at the entrance.

I sat down and watched their work; it occupied about five minutes. They had bought two bundles of green stuff—myrtle and flag iris—in a wooden bucket of water. One woman cleaned out two clay cylinders like drain pipes, which were stuck into the ground to hold branches and flowers, whilst the other woman ladled out water and poured it carefully over all the stones, paying particular attention to the top of the headstone. Was this a survival of tree worship, cooling the spirit, comforting it, or what? I saw an old, old story in this offering of water to the dead, though I could not unravel it all. One of the bundles of sandal-

wood was lighted, then stuck in the ground, the other carried off by the women, when they had chatted cheerfully with an old crone who carried on some business about the place.

Quiet as I found the town of Kobe, this spot was more so : it was hushed and inviting. Mosquitoes were there by the bushel, and I had no disturbing thought, except that they might drive me out. Throughout Japan it is difficult to find a spot whereon to sit down, or anything to sit upon ; the paddy fields and banks are wet always, and whatever the people do or wherever they go, they will have water and a wet world. This sounds odd, but it is true. I had grown tired of railway carriages and rickshaws—tired of lying, and kneeling, and crouching, and sprawling on cushions and matted floors—tired of beds even ; but here was a chance to sit in the quiet shade of the dead, to do nothing and to do it decently, as I felt ; for there can be nothing sacrilegious in having a fondness for tombs, even if they be counted sacred to others.

I wrote the above as I tried to dodge the mosquitoes by passing into the sunlight, which here and there fell between the trees ; but I was not allowed to sit down : blood showed over my hands, and my handkerchief was red-spotted from mopping my face, and had I not

moved on I should soon have been as dead as those who lay under the stones.

There is nothing strangely different in a Japanese and an English gravestone—a greater refinement in the latter, that is all. A little bordering of dressed stone set in the earth, a pediment or foot-piece fixed within, and one or two or three pieces raised above in tapering order—that is the usual form. Their favourite grave plant is cotoneaster, though they employ many others, none of which are inappropriate to this employment.

As smoke scares mosquitoes, I filched a stick of burning incense from a grave and sought a sunny spot. There I rested, enjoying the rest more, as a man but a few yards away was working hard at stone for a new grave. He was axing and chiselling the stone on the spot it was to occupy, rather disturbing to the poor wretch who lay beneath. We read of condemned prisoners being kept awake by the building of the scaffold. This seemed an extension of refinement; but did it matter at all?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### OF JAPANESE CHARACTER AND CAPACITY.

NO Japanese may escape the sight or influences of Nature, and of all more or less civilized men he is the nearest to Nature. One cannot separate him from earth. He reeks of it ; he desires of it ; he feels that he is a part of it, inalienably bound by his unchanging claims upon the land. The very sounds he emits—his Ay and Nay, his audible passions and his transports—are as near to the creaking of a limb or the sound of wind among leafy boughs as they are to sounds human. Japan is devoid of plains, provocative of shadows ; she imposes calm ; she has few hillmen ; of all lands she is the most silent. For days I was in the woods without hearing or seeing a bird ; when I heard one it had a soft, sweet song. Domestic animals are scarce, and domestic life involves no stir.

To me the ordinary native mind of Japan is very different from our own ; it is not a difference of years, of advancement ; it seems to have been derived from

other elemental forces ; it has been aided here, retarded there, by different factors ; it has looked in and upon itself, where we have looked out and about, till we have lost consciousness of what we are or whence we came. Where we have experienced a hundred shocks, changes, gains, and revivals, Japan has known scarce one. She has gone on by herself, where we have gone on by others. She has been searching herself, where we have been searching all the world. These may be causes of difference, arbiters of change. I will not admit that Japanese life is a finished thing, that it were well for the world to imitate it or to let it alone, or that it were well for the wisest of her own people to let others alone.

Japanese life does not complete a sort of journey or pursuit where all end in a finished achievement. Here is a life complete to its people, in few or no ways complete for Europeans. It aims at so little, it accepts so little, it dreams so little. It is so silent, so still, so uncommunicative, so altogether small. It is nowhere grand, lofty, large, in scheme or theme. Neither backward nor forward, nor out and away, nor deep within is there a sign or sound of large inspiration or full living.

The Japanese are the French of the Orient. They



are more capable than they seem, but there is a difference between capability and wisdom. If there is anything wrong in this statement, it is that the Japanese are not Orientals. Whatever stock they came from, they are now native of the soil they claim. Japan is herself, distinct, alone. The Japanese claim they are derived from the Ainu, the aborigines of all Japan overwhelmed by incursions of races from the North and from the Philippines.

Apart from their purely domestic life and their employments, they are a rough people. They have no delicacy in their touch. A girl or woman handles a baby with no more care than if it were of wood. My horned toads came in for rough treatment wherever they were caressed, and I was often compelled to protect them from rough handling. It is for me to forget what I did not enjoy or approve ; but as Japan looks to outsiders, one may state one's convictions. I met all sorts, but the common class chiefly. The better class of Japanese convey the impression that they are suspicious, abnormally sensitive to our opinions of them, and in a certain way aggressive. This aggressiveness I can explain only as a studied intention to assert themselves. In their Press and Parliament they persistently proclaim that they are as good as any other people or

race, but I have not learned how they define the word "good."

Since they have discovered that there are forms of civilization outside their own, they seem rather angry that they did not make the discovery earlier. Then the selected, educated, travelled Japanese—the man who has filled a position abroad and filled it very well—develops the conceit that his people are on a par with himself, which they are not. We may find civilized and savage in every country. Moreover, we may find a great many who are neither civilized nor savage. Japan has a preponderating number of this last class.

The Japanese are a gregarious people. They have learned to live at peace at close quarters ; they have been long guided and governed by narrow faiths and superstitions, which have trained them to regular habits of thought and rules of conduct ; they have laboured and slaved always ; they have believed in a great enemy, and made sickles into sword blades, rather than the reverse ; they have laboured their soil to come by a rare sense and intimacy with living, storied, and companionable things ; they have never conceived of the greatness or made use of their natural store. As explained elsewhere, their faith in water, the absence of animals and good implements, their refusal of foreign

trade and intercourse, and a hundred minor factors, have prevented their attacking and developing their land.

They have belittled the seekers after strange gods and strange empires, but they have not evolved a complete civilization. At least, they are not civilized according to the European ideal, and their indignation at the discovery that they are not will not help them at all. They are not a white race. Japan wants to be strong in numbers ; she had better be strong of soul. She cannot win from the West by challenging the West. This is not the time for Japan to claim racial equality. It is not a virtue to be white ; but it happens that the civilizations of greatest splendour and renown have been evolved by whites, and there is no past account, nor any prospect of any coloured or Asiatic people advancing, except on the white man's model. How can the Japanese, by copying, rivalling, and changing, equal the European ? If by our civilization we are distraught and flabby, Japan is raw and, in her native self, more or less repellent to the Western stock.

As I see the Japanese, it is still their necessity to develop themselves. No great Power will recognize Japan for more than political reasons. Japan has more than the colour barrier. It is no good trying to gloss over a fact of Nature. All the admiration in the world

for Japanese art, industry, courage, and success in war does not alter the fact that the Japanese are mentally and physically inferior to the Chinese, though far more likely to hasten reforms in their industrial and social life. Many Japanese have physical blemishes. They are not to be blamed for this ; the fact stands. On economic and humanitarian grounds, I would like to see the Japanese free to enter into competition with the workers of all lands. On physiological grounds I would not admit them to citizenship with any white race.

It is often said that the Japanese are immoral. I do not think so. I came to believe that in human intercourse they were frank and open ; they would talk of anything and do anything openly, where we would say or do worse, or no better, in private. Lest it be thought I am prejudiced against the Japanese, I venture to assert that there is not a sane European in the world, living among coloured people or Asiatics, who has not some subtle form of antipathy to a people of distinctly dissimilar instincts. Now, it is the instincts of the Japanese which Europeans are ever likely to oppose. They are wild, primal instincts. The mind has not emancipated itself from the body. It is the life of the senses, though well under subjection.

The native strength and persistence of the Japanese

secure them. Often one hears that they have not the commercial honesty of the Chinese nor the delicacy. But of this I am sure, that the Japanese as a nation are far too sensible to lose caste or reputation by lack of probity. They admit our code by adopting it, and they do not imitate our weak but our strong qualities. By nature or training they are a mistrustful people ; they are not so gentle as they pretend. Of course the country makes room for some fine souls. Considering his geographical position, his origin, his history, the Japanese is remarkable for many achievements, many virtues, many qualities of heart ; but he is not attractive—he is unfriendly. It is not shyness or ordinary indifference : it is a primitive, suspicious reserve, coldness. He does not see with another or for another.

I have observed myself watched very intently, watched as a cat or a monkey would watch a thing being hidden, when there was no earthly reason for any prying or spying at all. This stealth, or furtiveness, has a long history. One sees the primitive man in every action ; one does not see the slightest sign or desire on the part of the people in city, town, or country to break down the racial prejudices or racial differences between East and West. This is a mere gag, a bit of business advertised as “ honorary ” by a few vain pub-

licists. Prejudice of this sort is necessity. What is the use of calling it by any other name? The Forward Party wants the traveller with money, and wants his applause. Its vanity is distressing. It says to its people, "Be civil. Bow and scrape and change your facial apparel every day. We are pushing you, so be careful."

In the remote country places, the people do not want us. They are politely tolerant, but prefer their own room to our money. I proved that. I smiled out of gladness, out of a desire to be taken for a fair-dealing mortal. But often my smile got no response from the men. Women are from curiosity always more trustful and friendly up to a certain point; but seldom did I find a man whom I might consider intelligent who did not reveal a discomforting amount of bump-tiousness, cunning, or caution. I will not pay for every virtue. I will not believe it necessary to serve people before feeling one may obtain some service from them. Kind people are kind people, honest people are honest people, and it does not take time or experience to prove them. Honesty, kindness—these are not virtues; they are the outcome and obvious issues of common sense.

The stay-at-home native of Japan is silent and natural, never self-conscious, while those who have

travelled or affect European dress are conspicuous by their mannerisms and desire to attract attention. I am prepared to judge the Japanese more from what I feel instinctively than from what I actually encountered. Once I wrote of them, "No one is or can be rude." That is not correct. They can be both rude and cruel. I suggest that rudeness grows out of cruelty, and cruelty out of ignorance. There is a sign of reserve that may be construed as hard, cold, callous selfishness. No one offers anything to mother or father, and it is everywhere a case of the devil take the hindmost.

I do not see the Japanese possessed of much originality or initiative. He can see a thing when it is done, and he can imitate to perfection. He is very ingenious and resourceful in small things. If he were large in himself, his country would show more of his handiwork. He never did a big, a grand, or a lovely thing in all his national life. The biggest things he ever made were missionaries, though I am not sure that they did not come to him to be discovered. All the history of Japan, all her waves of change, stir, and recoil, show the work of the missionary pilgrim. Left to herself, she falls back and back into more and more primitive and obscure ways of living, till stress at home

and pressure from without force an opening, and a new era of war or art or commerce is ushered in.

And why has it been this way? Because Japan has not changed her blood. Consider the mixing and mixing that has gone to make any nation in Europe. Japan has neither absorbed nor been absorbed by any other stimulating power for more than two thousand years. Insufficient has come of the Esquimau and Tartar blood from the North and blood from the East and Central Asia. Acting alone, she has been breeding in and in, and though I do not write as an authority on race-breeding, I see plainly enough that in-breeding has not been good for Japan. She cannot improve appreciably of herself and by herself. Whatever she does for herself, she will breed no nearer to the European type. At home the Japanese beget Japanese; and go where they will to win money by hand labour, trade, or the spoils of war, they cannot change themselves nor those who stay at home.

It is my honest opinion that they are in the sulks, because they discover their unlikeness and the impossibility of their coming nearer to being like white men. Another thing, the nation is not awake to desire change; only a very small part is awake. The vast bulk of the people are still in the country, busy, isolated, and un-



conscious of the aims and hopes of political leaders and traders. Of the entire population of sixty millions, less than ten millions compose all her cities and large towns, and, with two or three exceptions, none are large. In the greatest of them, it is the concession to convenience, the desire for equality in trade and social status in the street which causes many to adopt European clothes and deportment.

In his home the Japanese remains himself, unchanged. If Japan were strong enough to turn out all foreigners, she would do so fast enough, and revel silently in her return to her old-time life of strange contrasts. The country people display no jealousy or concern; they have their land and their employments to themselves, but the traders of the big towns and the politicians nurse a grudge and the ill-concealed notion that the best of their trade is filched from them by the white men in their midst.

Put the position this way. Europe and America could do without Japan. We should suffer no more than a momentary shock if she disappeared from our world. But what of Japan if there were no Europe, no America? It is no exaggeration to say that she has developed into a World Power solely out of her trade relations with Europe and America. New Japan

falls between the simple and the grand. She is neither one nor the other. She is open to act anyhow for the foreigner's money. She is not interested in the interest the foreigner may take in the best side of Japan. She is genuinely afraid of being imitated, for she knows how much she has gained by imitating others.

The Japanese who argue in Europe have been made in Europe, and they cannot speak with equal force for those Japanese made in Japan. Japan has not opened her eyes and her heart to the broad facts of human life, nor come to see that no nation can affect isolation or independence and remain self-contained and in the best sense progressive. There is ample room, as there are just grounds, for all human differences. I would not write another word if I thought Japan could lose as much as a grain of rice by me ; but it does seem that whoever elects to exclude the Japanese, Japan should make no effort to exclude the white man. She may not be doing so by Act of Parliament, but in her private heart and effort she is doing so all the time.

If Japan sincerely desires to advance according to European ideals, she must be largely aided by Europeans for a long time to come. As I have said, the Japanese cannot change himself, and, left to himself, he has neither capacity nor desire to change his Institutions

Rather, it is the lack of Institutions we have to deplore. Those existing in Japan are exotic. In a State which is neither civilized nor savage, Institutions may be few; but where it is contended that Old Japan must go, or asserted that Old Japan is no more and that New Japan is a fact, or is to be the Europeanized portion of the East, I fail to see any truth or possibility of truth in the assertion. She can have Institutions only from greatly-increased self-development.

Japan's future is to be determined by the nature and extent of her foreign trade, and this must come of her internal development—her land. Commerce is king, and neither signing of treaties nor tearing up of treaties will add one bushel of rice to the country, nor alter the native demands and conditions of the people. Too clever by half, is my estimate of the present generation of Japanese pedagogue and publicist. It is natural enough that he should think well and speak well of his own; but when he goes abroad to return and preach equality, or anything like equal rights in international affairs, he misses his opportunity to help his kindred and break down racial prejudices—a term he employs too often, and misinterprets, too.

If Japan is to make the conquest of all conquests, let her make war against her hand tools, her paddy

fields, her thousand, thousand idle hills, and fight and subdue them. She likes to believe that she is the greatest modern discovery of the world, and not to be done without. Her opinion of herself has been bred out of America, and this may prove a great misfortune for Japan; the contrast is all too sharp and ill-timed. The thought and tendency of Europe and America are by no means one. Japan was all art where America was all trade, and the interchanges between the two countries have not been even a temporary advantage to Japan. Japan cannot model herself on America and make a better world for herself.

Japan has a habit of cutting the painter. The love of privacy in the national as in the domestic life is a trait unalterable. When she can, she flouts the outside world, puts up a notice, "Not at home," and goes back to her paddy fields and semi-nakedness again. Oh, say my brave modern Japanese, "We have decided for the European way now!" They have; and if they go forward in European enterprises it will be in company with an ever-increasing army of Europeans amongst them, whose labours and support will make them as jealous and irritable as ever. Left to themselves, they will emulate nothing European till they have made it their own; then it will be a different thing. Only the leaders

will stick up for the European way, because no spoils nor splendours can fall to the Paddy-field Party.

Since the leading men in Japan have been warped by their own ambitions, they profess to believe in change, growth, and betterment. At the back of their heads they believe in no such things, and hope for no such things. Only when the populace is asleep is there a chance for the politician. The more I saw of the people, the more unfortunate I thought them. I did not like them less, but I recognized they were less developed in mind, body, and estate than there was any need for them to be or to remain. Seeing their country is seeing them. Its condition proves their condition, native capacity, and disposition. One cannot say they are five hundred or a thousand years behind us ; that in the Middle Ages England or Europe had no better human type. It had. It had the white man, whatever that means ; and it means infinitely more than the Japanese appears ready to comprehend, and is proved by what the white man has done for himself in the past five hundred or thousand years.

It may be no business of ours to estimate and prescribe for other people, yet it would pay Japan handsomely to declare openly (not know it and deny it) that Europe does not recognize Asiatics as of the same quality

as themselves. Sure of her status, Japan might put her pedagogues and paid emissaries to do all they may to develop her people, and then in, say, five thousand years, or when they shall have grown strong enough to overrun Europe half a dozen times, and carried off a few millions of its fair women and idolized them, whilst making them the strong mothers of strong sons, there is just the possibility that they may become white as some Moors and Kurds and Asiatic Jews are white ; so that, between their skin and their capacity for art and industry, they may be accounted different—in fact so like Europeans that they will evermore pass freely amongst them, and hear nothing of racial difference or the barriers against which they now bleat and complain.

How contradictory and unreasonable I may seem ! but I have tried to explain both sides of Japan and her people. I have praised the simple, sure, and old ; here and there I have commended the new. I have found excuse for things I could not like ; I have striven to be just at the expense of a private opinion. I have seen Japan in being ; there was nothing else for me to do. Whoever sees a thing, sees it for himself ; for be sure that if two look on an object, it is two objects, and unlike.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### AN OPEN LETTER.

THE most astonishing feature of Japan is that the vast bulk of the country is in a state of nature. Hundreds of thousands of square miles of accessible and well-favoured hill country lie unpeopled and unproductive. Only where a region is convenient as a shrine or place of pilgrimage do the Japanese make any effort to occupy the hills. Nikko and Nara are examples ; also they prove that the earth is good, and the situation capable of producing a sturdier and higher type of humanity than is possible to the low country. To call this neglect of the land a mistake is too mild a term ; it shows the Japanese destitute of the first principles and aims of agriculture, or overborne by customs and fetishes of various kinds, it matters not which ; while the fact stands that they remain in a general way destitute amidst enormous and inexhaustible potential wealth.

The Japanese publicist complains that his country

is overcrowded, and that room must be found abroad. If it is true that Japan has sixty millions of people (which respectfully I incline to doubt), there is room for them multiplied by three or four, and no crowding. Japan has only to figure out the areas, occupied and unoccupied, to discern if she is more dense in body than in mind. From a European standpoint, Japan is a fairly large country, and there is no single area in Europe of equal size favoured severally and jointly with a better geological or soil base, rainfall, and climatic advantages for farming and the general industries of the land.

Japan squares at about twelve hundred by two hundred miles, or two-thirds of the size of France, or one and two-thirds the size of Great Britain. Assuming that all the land may be put to a profitable use up to at least three thousand feet elevation—and a great portion of Southern Japan may be utilized up to four or five thousand feet elevation—the native field open for settlement and development is vast beyond the conception of the Japanese.

The most childish and shifty excuses are made for the general neglect of the hill country. The Chief Forester, with conviction, told me that the hills might not be cleaned ; that they would not carry sheep ; that pigs gave off a bad odour ; that the Japanese did not



need meat ; and as they had plenty of *hands* to do the field work, there was no need to employ horses or bullocks. Machinery was not liked ; it was new, and they were not ready to put it to use. The best of this statement lay in its evident honesty from a Japanese standpoint ; but it was not honest, for in no single particular was it true, excepting, perhaps, that the tidiest and most profitable pig, if neglected, will create a bad odour. But Man may never escape the old maxim—"Muck is the mother of money." Farming is incomplete without animals, and it is impossible to preserve a sound countryside in a climate like that of Japan unless animals are regarded as the principal soil restorers and standard sources of wealth.

A low, free-rooting, and persistent bamboo occupies a great area of Japan, and the natives of all ranks and persuasions maintain that this bamboo, which in point of size and vitality is no more than coarse grass, is impossible of eradication, and it is for this reason the whole nation contends that the hills may not be won and held. This contention is absurd, and is the outcome of Don't Know, or Don't want to Know. The pioneer work of land reclamation during the past fifty years shows plainly enough that, where skill and systematic industry are brought to bear, there are no areas

which are irreclaimable, nor any individual or collective vegetation which may not be eradicated ; and, of course, land may be cleaned the more readily and economically where there exists a large and inexpensive labour supply.

To write of no more than lies within my own experience in New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania, North America, and Ceylon, I have engaged in the cleaning and stocking of land beset by vastly more persistent and heavier obstacles than those forming the native vegetation of Japan. The dense and almost perpetually wet native forests of New Zealand, and Gippsland in the State of Victoria, offered more natural obstacles to the square mile than is presented by the worst score of square miles of Japan. But the New Zealand bush and the Gippsland bush have given place to scenes as fair and prosperous as the eyes and heart of a farming man may know, and all within the space of thirty years.

Do the Japanese want proof a little nearer home, let them look to Western America ; to the tens of thousands of square miles which they assisted to win for Americans, Canadians, and, in not a few instances, for themselves. There remain to be studied the reasons or lack of reasons for the extraordinary aversion which the travelled Japanese shows for his country as a country. Persistently I maintain that he is hypnotized by a most debasing form

of vanity, which keeps him thinking that he has only to look all the time to things American or European, and he will become an American or European, or something most unlike and superior to his native self.

This is a hard subject to pursue, because it is so intangible, so elusive and impossible of complete analysis ; but it is a fact, and a big factor in the fortune and fate of Japan. The best imitators in the world, the Japanese have so far proved themselves the least capable of imitating and pursuing the agricultural system of the white race. Many countries have offered bonuses for the destruction of noxious vegetation and the reclamation of wind-swept or saturated and sour land, and if the Government of Japan desires an easy and sure system of procedure, it has only to offer a bonus for cleaning and setting in order its now profitless lands. This can involve no loss, as the demonstrators would bear their own expenses, and, succeeding, the reclaimed land would be worth far more than the bonus it would be necessary to offer. The country marked off into zones—climatic, geological, botanical, and economic—it would be easy to list the conditions and demands of each region, and evolve a safe system of procedure.

Japan is inclined to behave like a jealous and cock-sure child, who grasps the hand that strives to assist,

and stops the tongue that would explain. But she does not know of agriculture, and she cannot teach agriculture to herself ; she needs to be taught, and she will succeed for herself just so far as she is well taught by others. When Japan is discerning enough to invite some of the best field experts and agriculturists from America and the various southern divisions of the British Empire, especially from Australia and New Zealand, she may hope for a prompt and enormous accession to her wealth and an inestimable gain to her people for all time.

Land development is by far the most important subject confronting Japan : for whatever the value and prospects of trade ; whatever the value of timber used at home, exported, or regarded as a decorative feature and asset of the landscape ; whatever the value of water yielding power, domestic and irrigation supplies, their combined value is as nothing compared to the enormous wealth returnable from depasturing flocks and herds, and establishing communities of active workers at higher altitudes—an essential factor to the improvement of the race.

As the Japanese maintain that they conquer by yielding, no matter who excludes them, let them include as many of the white race as they can possibly attract to their own country ; the whites won't rob them or

swamp them, or leave them in any way poorer or weaker. Whatever improvement Japan has effected during the last fifty years has been wholly and solely through the white man, and to-day the Japanese is no better fitted to direct his own agriculture than am I to steer a rudderless ship across the Atlantic.

The countries round the Pacific should see the mutual advantage of affording Japan the fullest opportunity to acquire a working experience of agriculture, that she may be able to develop and live by her own store. To this end, if sane, Japan will encourage Agricultural Companies to take up tracts of hill country and demonstrate its usefulness. Granted security of tenure over two or three lives as a minimum, capital and skill to employ it would be forthcoming, and no risk or possibility of loss attach either to the Government or the people of Japan.

Japan may learn all she needs to know of trade and commerce from Europe and America ; but she needs also to study the science of land development as it is carried on by those of European descent. Japan has neglected her land. She has idealized the sea and the tree, deified the Holy Carp—making fish, wood, and water her three divinities. This may be a discovery, a shock, a rebuke, or a falsehood even to the Japanese

and to some Europeans, but I make these categorical statements in the interests of Japan. She claims the right and the need to progress ; whatever that may mean and embody, it should mean the improvement of the general condition of her people. A right to enter and contend and take from every land will not improve the Japanese. There is no proof anywhere of a nation made out of returned colonists. All true improvement is effected within a nation's boundaries, and until Japan sums herself, her sum must be small.

At times it is my employment to estimate the quality and the value of the raw material of various countries. I have examined Japan to appraise it at a high agricultural value. The dormant wealth in the unpeopled parts is far greater than that which existed naturally in any corresponding area of Australia, New Zealand, or Western America. Whatever the present-day value of Japan's land products, I see her capable of producing twenty times as much with the same number of hands and no greater outlay. I see a first extra cost, of course ; I see the expense of clearing and preparing the land, and a certain outlay in providing for new industries. By reserving the best natural forest areas of each region, the timber and fuel industries would be assured ; the balance should be devoted to agricultural and pastoral

industries. Wood worship and the woodcraft engendered of the shrines should not monopolize and make sacred all the hills.

It must not be forgotten that man has control of vegetation ; if he destroy a forest, he can provide another. Timber is not the precious and indispensable thing some people would have us believe. We may worship trees, but live without them : they are not as necessary as they were. Small and quick-growing plants are destined soon to supply the great world needs—sugar, spirit, and fibre. With fibre come paper, rope, and building material (compressed). Iron, cement, and artificial stone are supplanting timber in all substantial building ; wood grows to be an ornament, and has smaller place in proportion to the increase of human numbers and trade. Sugar, spirit, and vegetable oil at the will of man produce fuel, light, heat, and minor products in variety. Further, a country situated as Japan can never run short of timber.

What are the land laws ? Who owns and withholds those vast stores of wealth from the hands and stomachs of the people ? Has the Government a land policy, and something more than a policy ? Has it such sense, such heart, such knowledge as will soon cause it to put its soil to use ? Japan will lose by look-

ing abroad ; her business is at home. There is plenty of land for those Japanese who would emulate foreign ways of dealing with soil and crops and kine. No land can advance without producing animals on a large scale. Meat, butter, milk, cheese, bacon, lard, wool, leather, manure—can these be done without ? And what is Japan without them ? She has no efficient substitutes for them.

It may be easier to estimate a people than an individual. The mass can never hide itself. Moreover, it makes no effort to do so, whilst this is the sole care of most individuals. I write this, lest it be thought that my brief season in Japan could give me small excuse for making any estimate and suggestions for the betterment of her people ; but my life has been given to the study of peasant people and their employments. If we are fitted to a task we are not long in coming to its heart, and it was easy to discern the native store and crying needs of Japan. It is no business of mine to pick holes, make mean comparisons, and discover shortcomings. My concern is to help where I can ; but I cannot forget Stevenson's short proverb : " There was a wise man who journeyed forth at morning ; he told the people what he thought of them, and they buried him at the set of sun."



One cannot deal with Japan in an uncritical spirit and do her any sort of service. Old and New Japan are in such sharp conflict as to reveal a positive disloyalty on the part of the Moderns. Within half a century she has passed from one of the least to one of the most mercenary of nations. Japan is industrious : that is well ; but one-tenth of the energy would secure more if given a new and more rational direction. She is wasting her substance abroad, instead of estimating herself and formulating a sound domestic policy. To this hour nothing has been done to alter her land interests or improve the lot of her fifty million peasants. Fear or no fear of outside enemies, Japan's real and lasting business lies at home. Talk about an outlet for her surplus population is a blend of conceit, greed, and paltry ambition. Every country has its share of adventurers who find no profit in legitimate activities. The slavish mimicry in government is none but the worst sign ; or if there is a worse, it is the secret rebellion against the men and things it slaves to imitate. Japanese testiness needs to be overcome ; but one may not readily discern its possible destroyer.

Religions are still playing their part in Japan. But whether she respect the animal or not, she must have more meat, and she must provide animals for meat and

believe in meat, or she won't reduce by the breadth of a hair the natural barrier and difference between East and West. There is no virtue in abstinence, my dear little men. There are more differences made by diet than you are inclined to discern, so pray begin to discern and adopt one more science from the West—the science of feeding. Whatever you may have had to go without in the form of fires and fleshpots, it may be different in the near future. Oil, spirit, and your native waterfalls are giving you heat, light, and power ; put these to further use and cook your food. Bring in some decent things ; throw out some indecent things. If you must have law-makers, let them do one diabolical thing—legislate against the people's existing forms of food.

Don't think because you have fought some good fights fairly and squarely that you are anything like as capable as you think you are. You did not invent those ships and arms. I do not like your New Japan ; but that is not your fault. If it is a fault at all, it rests on those who came amongst you and persuaded you that Vanity was the fine flower of the West, and that it paid to fly it mast high. Young Japan, you are already the victim of a commercial conspiracy. In thinking of nothing higher than taking from others, you will lose yourselves. Does it matter ? In some ways—yes ; in

others—not at all. He will be a clever man, or a clever fool, who succeeds in improving your land products and its peasantry, for wherever and whenever any change and so-called betterment is made, the population may cry out, “ We were better off before.”

These few words on Japan are no dogmatic effusion. Honestly, carefully, I have tried to set down what I came to believe ; where it seemed to me rich, full of meaning, or meaningless. By nature Japan is intended for agricultural pursuits ; to have by far the larger part of her population bred out of and kept up among her hills. She is to be new-made out of eating meat and clothed with garments of sheep’s wool ; she is made to share wood fires and cooked food, and, now and then, the merriment and abandon bred of a little wine. So, as I have said elsewhere, Japan is not yet come to full stature. Japan may manufacture and the world may buy, and Japan sell herself to the devil thereby. If she would be strong within herself in the eyes of the world, she must possess and dwell among the hills.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE HUMOURS OF TRAVEL.

AT Akita the innkeeper gave me a compass that I might find my way home to him. The town was less than a mile square, the site flat as a board, and held only thirty-four thousand people. I never could steer by a compass, and I never knew any one travel with fewer guides and accessories. I have trained my faculties till they lead me without a thought or an effort of thought. I was assured that without a guide Japan was impossible. Well, I went up and down and round about. What I did not hear or see, I did not want to hear or see. What came my way was in my way and enough.

The railway stations are all named in roman letters, and there are brief directions about crossing platforms, changing trains, etc. The carriages of the different classes are marked by wide bands of colour—the first white, the second blue, the third red. All are smoking carriages, and there are no reserves for ladies, so one

can't go wrong. The carriages are dusted and the floors washed every fifty miles or so, and all classes are orderly and quiet. The gauge is very narrow, the carriages quite tiny from without, though roomy and comfortable within. The pace averages about twenty miles an hour, a sort of farmer's jog-trot, in keeping with the silent movements of the country.

I count it no crime to set down that I found myself more dependent on other mortals than in any land I had known. I knew no Japanese or any tongue which could help me with the people ; but I believed in the universal brotherhood of man, so far as to feel convinced that, where others could live, I should not die of want. I trusted to the equivalent of a silver shilling to secure for me anything I might need—as it always did.

Like the Japanese, I was in no sense shy ; and if I attracted a crowd or made it laugh at me, what matter ? Looking back, I see none but friendly faces. I did not pass out of any door without receiving unmistakably kindly words of farewell. At times I must have given far more trouble than I was worth, but there was never a murmur or a reduction of service ; and when I had gone, no words of good riddance followed me—of that I am sure.

Many things I have learned in the course of a life

passed among simple people, and one of the most important is—to be simple with them. I carried no gew-gaws. My watch—a huge, cheap, metal affair—made them laugh and admire my strength in carrying it round ; it could not make them feel that I was their superior in wealth or anxious to appear above them. My clothes were odd affairs. They could not see as much quality in my wool as I could in their silk or fine cotton crêpe. If I had good boots, their lofty indifference to footgear kept them from seeing as far as the ground. In a worldly sense, there is no microscopic curiosity. The only people who examined me and the contents of my bags closely were the housemaids, and they used every article by turns openly and frankly, just to see how the comb would comb, the brush brush, and the powder clean teeth. I used to laugh, and thereby lose more material and gain more confidence.

This confidence is worth a word or two. I did not meet a shy, timid, or a reserved girl ; I did not meet a shy, timid, reserved, or rude person of any sort. But allowing that I gave no cause, I might have met a timid girl, or one taking time to show any confidence in me ; but I did not. Over and over again young girls took charge of me as if they had known me all their days ; they did not seem to know the meaning of stranger or

fear of any sort. And here let me say in parenthesis that the only things in the country discovering me for a stranger were the dogs. From the first they scented me out ; I repeat, they scented me out, for I believe the discovery came to them through their noses and not their eyes. In fact, I know they scented me from afar, as they would bark and growl in the back premises before they rushed out. They barked singly, then together ; they followed till they grew into little packs, and though they were never formidable in size or determined in manner, I disliked their noisy demonstrations against me ; but these ceased when I had reformed my constitution by Japanese fare, and become as odourless as the natives.

It seemed to me that human life was held so cheap, it could leave no room for fear on the part of girls or any one else. I did not get a hint or sign that I might consider myself safe, or my belongings safe ; there seemed to be no possibility of either being unsafe. As to getting lost, I could welcome such a possibility, or, rather, I could not believe in such a possibility. Lost in this world ! Think of it, picture it, hedged-about man ! Who would not be lost awhile ? As I have written, every place is mine for a season at least. As one does not drop out of space into a country, but

comes by a road of which one has noticed the details by the way, one arrives at new premises more or less informed. What is more, we have convictions born of experiences, and mine were such as to convince me I could go up and down and round about Japan with no other aids than a few shillings a day, and a kindly eye where I needed a simple attention.

How I went was this way. I marked off a few places to be reached by rail, and a friend gave me the approximate times of arrival and departure. This served for the first fortnight, and at the end of that time I was prepared to act as guide to any one wishing to see that part of Japan. The first native inn was the worst, perhaps because I was new to it; and it was not true to its name, for it called itself *The Grand*, to which I added *grandmother*. But when I left, the boots or the landlord—and all through Japan I never could divine one from the other—gave me a letter to an innkeeper at Shiogama, a village where I did not wish to stay, though I had to go there to embark on my voyage to Matsushima.

Three young men and two maids were at the station, and they took the letter and me by force to the inn. Of course it rained, making it easy to accept shelter, though I was determined that I would not stay the night.



I ordered a boat for Matsushima once, twice, perhaps ten times I ordered it, and perhaps countermanded it. Anyhow, they understood and decided it would be safer for themselves if I went on. No, they did not. As quietly as I had ordered, they ordered a boat, took me and my belongings on board, accepted my little offering, and just as in the play, out came the letter, and just a word or two, Yadoya (hotel), Matsushima.

In time I found the hotel, and its occupants found me and took me in, produced a little red book, which had these words only in explanation—Conversation for Beginners—and held a number of trials and troubles such as befell the gardener's daughter in her efforts to make exchanges of pens and compliments with the carpenter's son in the French manner. I was glad to find that the Japanese had no more patience with this sort of literature than have I ; and after we had decided that oysters were not in season (it is a great place for them), that I could not eat fish raw or made into slimy soup, that I took a bath sometimes, and that I would pay yen 3.50 a day and sooner or later move on, we closed the book and re-entered upon the silent life.

The hostess, with rare discernment, foresaw my few wants, or, let me say in fairness to the Japanese, it would be rare in most countries. On my leaving she made

out the bill for three yen per day, or fifty sen less than the bargain ; showed me how much to pay the rickshaw men for taking me and my baggage to the station ; and then, of course—the letter ! It happened to name the same house—in fact, the only one at Asamushi—which was on my list, and there, as the reader knows, I had a rare welcome and kind treatment. Out and about, or fast at home, I had no difficulties.

For the first week or so, I was sustained by curiosity. I tasted things, tried to make them out, and wondered what they would make out of me. I know I had some pronounced objections ; but, excepting the something or other met and masticated on the train, and which would not lie down and be quiet, on the first night I lay at Sendai, all the little things tucked themselves into my inmost being and acted as silent supports. If I suffered at all during the first week, it was from trying to combine the fares of East and West. I took of whisky and brandy, of brown bread, chocolate, and cheese, and not one of these agreed with the juleps and juices of Japan. As I realized this, I plumped for Japanese fare, and soon came by a rare calm within and clearness of head.

Movement upsets me ; but with Japanese fare I moved and moved, and found less than usual discomfort from change of waters, beds, and boards. Ah, those

beds ! They were never uncomfortable, nor superficially odd ; but the manner of making them and their disappearance, and the waiting for them to come as kinds of living companions—those were sensations I cannot forget.

I did not suppose the Japanese had traversed ways more Arcadian and serene than had fallen to my feet in Europe, the much-trodden. I came believing in the existence of a people finished as the Greeks ; but should I doubt the Greeks had their back premises and their pig wallows ? Japan has not these. To me, Japan is not yet born. I have looked on her ruins and her well-preserved work, both good of their kind, but I have known better kinds ; most countries show better kinds. The familiar and enchanting landscapes of Japan reduce the European into overpraise of everything. The best things in Japan are not the work of the Japanese. Nature has a sly way in the East, and Eastern art is sly.

I cannot idealize my Japan and speak truly. I might be the lover anywhere, but I cannot love all things in Japan. I will not accept its discomforts and absurdities as necessities of the situation. Over most of my life I have been seeing differences in the domestic and social life of peoples. As a nation, Japan must be written down as more primitive in herself, and backward in her

employments, than those whom she challenges and would regard as equals. There is no need to go barefooted nor to wear clogs ; there is no need to sit over braziers and suffer a mild martyrdom ; there is no need to crowd and squat and curl on floors ; there is no need to imitate ants, monkeys, and praying grasshoppers ; there is no need to do without, and do without, till there's nothing left but to do without ; there is no need to live on mere frogs and fishes fare in the everlasting slush plots of the vales. Good fare, good fare, and again good fare, if you would be fairer and finer, my good little men. I don't worship beef or brawn ; but I believe in some things not employed in Japan, and there is great need that they should be employed—that is, if Japan would emulate Europeans.

A fork or a spoon is as clean as a chopstick, and a chair more supporting than a cushion, so I'm for the West and some of its charms. I can find more dangerous filth in any European town of a million inhabitants than I may find in all Japan, but I may not discover as much tomfoolery. It is often said, we are all of us just beginning to be clean. The Japanese are clean in preparing their food, and immaculately clean in their homes and persons. They bring nothing dirty into the house, neither cat nor dog, and fowls are trained to pass their

days and nights on perches, knowing that should they dare to move they'd be put in the pot.

Here are stone and clay to make good bricks ; here are lime, gravel, and sand ; here is timber and more timber, so why will ye not build and make yourselves homes? Will ye not rear strong and splendid edifices unto your gods? No. Your brain never conceived in the great way. Your big Daibutsu and your big stones of Nara bespeak no national soul ; a record of a pilgrimage, no more. No widespread and glowing sense of things great or good, as the soul feeds on the symbol of Goodness.

I could not feel that Japan had ever been, nor could I come to believe that it would be the source of a great soul. That was my concern, to come by the causes or possible causes of soul increase. I did not feel large, strong, full to the lips, when in Japan. It seemed to me like faring on hors-d'œuvres and dessert, and leaving out the solid things which make the meal. I had time and an eye ; I could look and wait, listen and watch. If the day and the mood were not favourable, I could come again, as I did often, but seldom with an enlivened sense. In truth, the great is not there. The tales of the feudal barons are barren, the fights of the Saumari are all my eye The best employment for a European

visitor in the Japanese towns is curiosity hunting ; but as the old guidebooks have it, " Take care and keep your temper."

Japan does not play. I will not accept ceremonial tea, the Geishas' charms, the Yoshiwara, or the theatre for play. I want a sense of life ; the will to skip and gambol, and hang the headache of to-morrow. I stayed with boys and youths of all types, and I saw too much sobriety. Should the world ever become sober it will become mad ; drink saves us to reason. There are ills and pains and thirsts for gains which strong drink alone will cure. I would rather live among men mad from too much bibbing than live in a temperance settlement always. It is a question of latitude, and a question of sense, and often the one determines the other. Some splendid joys are born of sobriety, but life is a continuous affair ; and all its poor and incomplete periods—they form the bigger half of life—come from a lack of animation. I could not idle in a complete sense, for Japan was always wet or clammy or moss-grown, and one must lie down to idle in body and mind.

My prospective stay in Shimonoseki was cut short, because I could not connect up a long land journey unless I started at once. I had thought I would camp down, review, weigh, and appraise it all : be fair to Japan, to

prospective readers, and to myself. But the experience ended in the abrupt way, as it does often. When I get near frontiers or ports of embarkation, I say, "I'll finish such paragraphs and round off such and such chapters," and not one of them has ever come to print. The nearest I ever got to a prompt finish was in a book on Spain, when I summed up the provinces as I traversed them, all except the last !

If in some of these pages there is more of the writer than of Japan, may I not ask, "Is not the traveller the thing?" Places and their concerns are not worth seeking if they bring no increase of concern, insight, and security to those who make trial of strange regions. In Japan I was the labourer : I worked to understand. For this world's good or ill, I have my little day and my say, and never more than now have I wished to see clearly and to write justly. I have given little to the world, but it was a gift always. I sold nothing ; I took nothing. I call myself an idler, because it is a restful fancy. To call work a pleasure is to live gladly by labour.

Should these notes ever come to print, and the critics sit down to play the devil with them and me, perhaps here and there one will discern and protest that the man who goes abroad to find corn and wine for his stay-at-home relations gets enough chaff and cold water as he

wanders on ; and if through the clouds he see the sun at times, and find no fault with his bed among the pines, it is more their duty to be thankful that they eat and drink from his store and suffer none of the discomforts of his pilgrimage.



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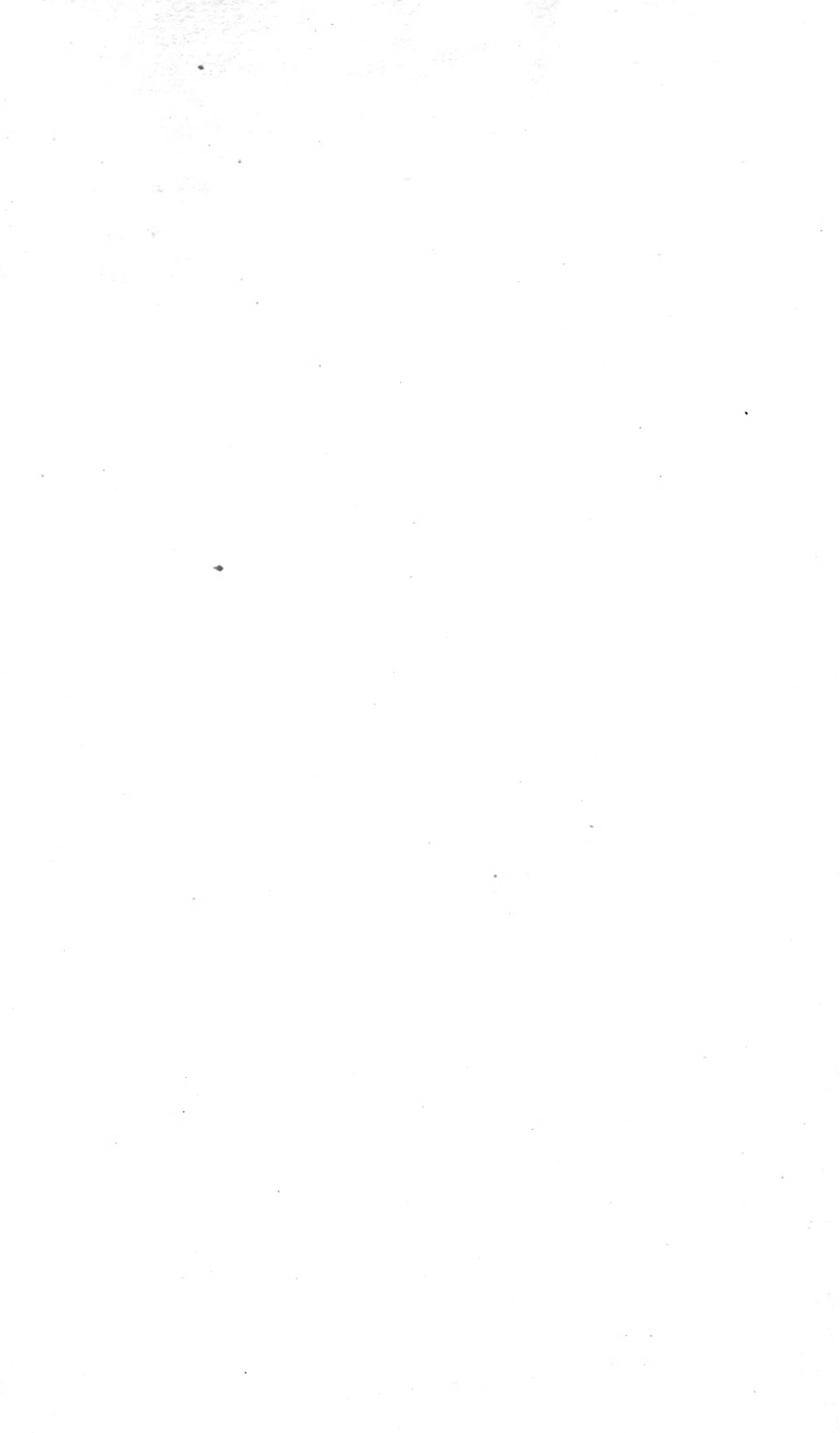
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